






*St Mary's Inst*

## **The Greater Love**



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CHAPLAIN McCARTHY  
(Before the Attack at Rembercourt.)

# The Greater Love

By  
Chaplain George T. McCarthy,  
U. S. Army



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## PREFACE

To him who will but observe the genesis and development of moral qualities, whether in the individual Man or in the collective State, there finally comes, with compelling force, the conviction—God is in His world and has care of it! Out of the slime of things mundane, out of the very clay of Life's daily round of laughter and tears, loving and hating, striving and failing, living and dying—the romance of Peace, the Tragedy of War—God is still creating men and nations and vivifying them with souls Immortal. Providence but looks upon the water of the commonplace, and behold! it becomes wine of Cana!

The recent world war, hallowed by the very purity of motive and intention with which our American Manhood took up its burden, led us nationally unto those heights of moral perspective and spiritual vision known only to him who toils upon the hill of Sacrifice. No Spartan of Athenian fields, no Regulus of Rome or Nathan

Hale, was nobler, higher motivated or less afraid than our own heroic American Doughboy!

Into the shaping and formation of his moral character many forces entered; and, not least of these, the Military Chaplain. This man—and every sect and denomination generously gave him—was pre-eminently God-fearing, thoroughly patriotic, unselfishly charitable, untiringly zealous, and whole of soul devoted to duty.

Mine was the privileged and sacred duty, as Vicar General of the Fourteen States comprising the Great Lakes Vicariate, of knowing intimately and directing the splendid work of these heroic soldiers of the Cross. The inspiration I drew, both from these priests and from contact with their work and written reports, whether in cantonments, camps, hospitals, transports, battle-ships, or on the flaming front of the battlefields, I shall ever treasure and recount with pride.

Archbishop Hayes, appointed by the Holy Father "Chaplain Bishop" in charge of all priests in Military Service, and who conducted the vast responsibilities of that most important work with such eminent success, has declared our Chaplains to be "the Flower of the Ameri-



can Priesthood." One of such is Father McCarthy, Author of this book "The Greater Love." The same zeal that prompted him to follow the boys in Khaki and Blue Over There—making himself one with them in hardship, danger and wounds for the sake of their immortal souls, now impels him to the writing of this Book. "The Greater Love" is a religious message which teaches that as man needed God in war—with a crescendo of need reaching full tide in the front trench—even so he needs him in Peace. The message is clothed in the narrative of adventure—personal experiences of the Author—and every page an epic of absorbing interest. No one is better qualified to bring us message from Over There.

RT. REV. MSGR. WM. M. FOLEY, V. G.



# "THE GREATER LOVE"

BY

GEORGE T. MCCARTHY, Chaplain, U. S. Army

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## CHAPTER I

LEAVE HOME—BASE HOSPITAL NO. 11—CAMP  
DODGE

"Very well then, Father, you have my permission and best wishes."

How the approving words and blessing of good Archbishop Mundelein thrilled me that memorable morning in 1918. The rain-washed freshness of April was abroad in Cass street; and the soft breeze, swaying the curtain of the Chancery window where he was seated, brought incense of budding tree and garden.

Patiently he had listened, while I presented my reasons for wishing to become a war Chaplain. How, obedient to that call to National Service which is

"The pride of each patriot's devotion,"

millions of our boys were exchanging the shelter of home and parish influence for the privation and danger of camp and ship and battlefield.

To accompany them, to encourage them, to administer to their spiritual and moral needs, to fortify their last heroic hours with "Sacramenta propter homines," here was a Christlike work pre-eminently worthy the best traditions of the Priesthood.

Even as, earnestly, I pleaded my case, I bore steadily in mind recollection of that lofty patriotism and brilliant leadership which had already made Chicago's Archbishop a foremost National Champion. It was but yesterday that the Secretary of the United States Treasury had called, personally, to thank and congratulate him on his inspiring patronage of Loan and Red Cross Drives.

In the sympathetic glow of his face I read approval even before hearing the formal words of permission.

"Moreover, Father, I will appoint an administrator at once, to care for the parish during your absence. You will receive, through Father Foley's office, letters duly accrediting you to



Bishop Hayes, Chaplain Ordinary, and the National authorities."

A fond ambition, long cherished, was about to be realized! I had, of course, been doing something of a war "bit," co-operating with parishioners, and town folks like Mayor Gibson and Doctor Noble, in the various patriotic rallies and drives. Father Shannon of the "New World" thought so highly of our city's efforts as to visit us and eloquently say so at a monster Mass Meeting of citizens. "Do you know, George," he remarked that night as he marched beside me in the street parade, "if I could only get away, I would gladly go as a Chaplain."

Then I told him my secret, how I had filed my war application some months before, and had been meanwhile seasoning my body to the out-of-doors and practicing long hikes.

But a single cloud now remained in the radiant sky of dreams—the thought of parting! Ten years of residence in so Arcadian a place as Myrtle Avenue, and in so American a town as Harvey, engender ties of affection not easily to be sundered. Then, too, the school children, how one grows to love them, especially when you have

given them their first Sacraments, and even joined in wedlock their parents before them. Of course for the priest who, more perhaps than any other man, "has not here a lasting city," whose life is so largely lived for others, and whose "Holy Orders" so naturally merge with marching orders, the leave-taking should not have been so trying. Preferable as would have been

"No moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea,"

the parting that night with the people in the school hall, and again, the following morning at the depot, was keenly painful—a grief, however, every soldier was to know, and, therefore, bravely to be endured.

How sacred and memorable were the depot platforms of our beloved country in war time! Whether the long, smoke stenciled, trainshed of the Metropolis, or the unsheltered, two-inch planking sort, of the wayside junction; they saw more of real life, the Tragedy of tears and the Comedy of laughter, than any stage dedicated to Drama. There, life was most real and in-

tense. The prosaic words "All Aboard" seemed to set in motion a final wave of feeling that surged beyond all barriers of the conventional—the last pressure of heart to heart and of hand to hand; the last response of voice to voice; the last sight of tear dimmed eye and vanishing form, as the train rumbled away beyond the curve, leaving a ribbon of black crepe draped on the horizon.

First impressions, we are told, are most lasting. Arrival at Camp Dodge, Iowa, the following morning and subsequent meeting with the officers and enlisted men of Base Hospital No. 11, made an impression so agreeable time itself seems ~~merely~~ to have hallowed it.

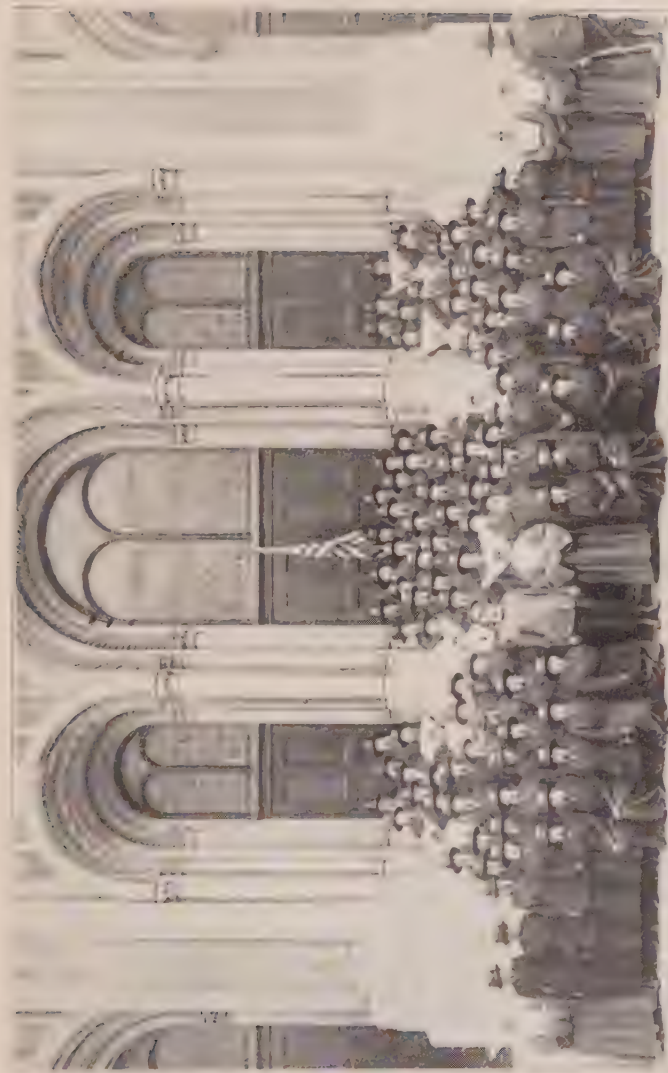
Association with the soldierly and gracious Colonel Macfarlain, the splendid Major Percy, the energetic Captain Flannery, together with Doctors Roth, Ashworth, Carter (the same T. A. Carter whose skill later saved the lives of poisoned Shirley and Edna Luikart), Lewis, Shroeder, and others, became at once an inspiration and pleasure. Most of these gentlemen had been associated with either St. Mary of Nazareth or Augustana Hospitals, Chicago; and had

patriotically relinquished lucrative practices to serve their country in its need. Words cannot too highly praise, nor excess of appreciation be shown our gallant public-spirited doctors and corpsmen, who, whether here or overseas, made every sacrifice to build up and maintain the health of the largest Army and Navy of our history.

The personnel of enlisted men, too, with Base 11, was exceptionally superior, coming from some of the best families of the Middle West. Anderson, McCranahan and the two Tobins of the famous Paulist choir were there, and what wealth of vocal melody they represented! Talbot, Bunte, and Leo Durkin of Waukegan; Dunn, Farrell, Lewis, Talbot—these, and five hundred others like them, were the splendid fellows to whom I now fell heir.

Camp Dodge, like many another Cantonment, the War Department miraculously “raised” over night, was a vast school, pulsating with martial throb. Hundreds of the brain and brawn of the far-flung prairies were arriving daily, and being classified, drilled and seasoned into efficient soldiers.





U. S. UNIT No. 2—BLESSING OF UNIT'S COLORS AT ST. STEPHEN'S.



Poets have to be born; but soldiers, in addition to qualities inbred, have to be made; and while the process of making was invariably laborious and often discouraging, it usually repaid patient effort. The raw recruit of yesterday became the pride of the line today!

They call me the "Raw Recruit,"  
 The joke of the awkward squad,  
 The rook of the rookies to boot,  
 And a bumpkin, a dolt and a clod;  
 But this much I'll plead in defense  
 I seem popular with these chaps,  
 For they keep me a'moving thither and  
 /, hence  
 From Reveille to Taps.

Though no doubt I have had them for years,  
 For the first time I'm *sure* I have feet!  
 When the Corporal said "Halt" it appears  
 That my feet thought he ordered "Re-  
 treat"!  
 And my eyes o'er who's blue ladies 'd rave,  
 And called them bright stars of the night,  
 Now simply refuse to behave

And mix up "Eyes Left" with "Eyes  
Right."

I'll admit that I'm no hand to brag;  
But the fact is I've won a First Prize!  
'Twas not that I have any drag,  
Nor excel in the officers' eyes.  
It was close, but I won, never fear;  
My home training helped me, I guess;  
I beat every man about here;  
At being the first in, at "Mess"!

My Corporal admits I'm not bad  
Through the night, when I'm buried in  
sleep!  
It's waking that I drive him mad,  
And cause very demons to weep.  
But Rome was not built in a day!  
And once I get used to my suit,  
I'll just force all these pikers to say  
"He once *was* a raw recruit!"



## CHAPTER II

### CAMP MILLS—ST. STEPHEN'S, NEW YORK—ENTER ARMY

Given sufficient time and mellowing, the butterfly eventually merges from the chrysalis; and it was with rapturous delight early June saw us exchange Camp Dodge for Camp Mills, Long Island! We were now on the shores of the Atlantic, and would soon tread the deck of our ship of dreams—a transport bound for Over There!

Enter, now, the “season of our discontent!” It all grew out of the nature of the Commission I was holding. It was not at all satisfying. Commission in the Red Cross, I discovered, did not authorize front line service; it would hold a person somewhere in the rear area; this would not do; I determined to enter the regular Army.

A kind Providence helped bring this about! Instructions were abruptly received from the War Department classifying all Red Cross Chaplains as mere civilians, denying them the

right to sail with the Units they had accompanied East!

Fully fifteen other such Chaplains were then at Camp Mills waiting sailing orders. They, too, had left their home towns and positions fully expecting service overseas. Receipt of this heart-breaking news induced many to give up the work and return home, utterly discouraged. It only served to hasten my entrance into the regular Army.

Going at once to the Rectory of St. Stephen's, East 29th St., New York, direction and cordial welcome was there received from one of God's noblest of men, Bishop Hayes. Appointed by the Holy Father to the special direction and care of all Chaplains in the National service, this brilliant and big-hearted Prince of the Church was father and friend to all.

Father Waring, the Vicar General, and the vicars and assistants in the Ordinariate and parish of St. Stephen's co-ordinated in their own charming manner with the vastly important work and cordial hospitality of their devoted chief.

Within a week the physical and mental examinations had been successfully passed and com-

mission received as First Lieutenant in the National Army.

While those days at St. Stephen's were of surpassing pleasure in the rare companionship afforded, they were characterized, too, by a round of strenuous activity. There was the necessary visit to Fifth Avenue, where the good ladies of the Chaplain's Aid, doing the same great good in the East that Father Foley's Aid Society was doing in the West, generously supplied the necessary Mass and Sacramental equipment. Then, too, the farewell Musical by the Paulist vocalists of Base 11, given at Garden City; and for which Mrs. Charles Taft kindly acted as hostess. Genuine *régret* marked that unavoidable parting. To co-labor with such splendid officers and men was truly a privilege; and to have served, even briefly, with the gallant "11" that wrought so worthily overseas, is an honor proudly ever to be cherished.

It was during these days an event occurred which the "Parish Monthly," of St. Stephen's, was good enough to record:

"On Tuesday, July 23, Unit No. 102, Overseas Nursing Corps, gathered in our church, to ask,

in truly Catholic fashion, God's blessing on their journey across the Atlantic. Ten 'Cornet' Sisters of Charity are in charge of this Unit, which is almost wholly Catholic in its membership and which has been recruited from hospitals conducted by these Sisters in the South and West.

"At six-thirty, Chaplain George T. McCarthy, U. S. A., of Chicago, celebrated Holy Mass. A congregation which numbered, besides the Unit, our own Sisters of Charity, many overseas Nurses attached to other units and a goodly quota of our parishioners was present. All received Holy Communion. At the conclusion of the Mass, the "Star-Spangled Banner" was sung, and after he had blessed a large American flag—the colors of the Unit—Father McCarthy bade the nurses farewell."

#### SERMON

"In this holy hour and place, while Jesus, the gentle Master, still lingers in your Eucharistic hearts, we are met for a two-fold purpose—to bless the starry banner of the free—the colors of your Unit—and to wish you Godspeed on your heroic way.

"Here within these historic walls of St. Ste-

phen, the Proto-Martyr, whose every stone and pillar and vaulting arch is richly storied with the memories of surpassing men and women and their splendid achievements—here, as it were, on the shore of the far-flung billows of the Atlantic, you are gathered from the length and breadth of our beloved country. With all the sacred courage of an Agnes of Italy, an Ursula of England, a Joan of France, you have, during the past few days and weeks, been called upon to bid your loved ones at home a fond and tender farewell, as you go to follow the trail of the Crimson Cross to service overseas.

“Our first and most holy purpose here, indeed, is to bless this flag that is to lead you on your way; but most truly may the question be asked: ‘Can the flag of our beloved Country be blessed more fully than it already is?’ Its red is consecrated by the blood of countless heroes; its white is stainless and unsullied as the Truth and Justice for which it has forever stood; its blue is of the midday heavens, lofty in its purpose to point the way of freedom to all mankind, that ‘Government of the people, for the people, and by the people’ may not perish from the earth!

“As we unfurl it to the breeze, it speaks with an eloquence irresistible and it tells a story of heroism and patriotism unsurpassed. It brings memory of Lexington and Concord; it tells of suffering at Valley Forge, and of Victory at Yorktown. It was waved in triumph on the hills of Gettysburg; and the blue of Grant and the gray of Lee entwined it forever in the reunion of Appomattox. Dewey carried it to victory in Manila Bay, even as Shafter and Joe Wheeler did at San Juan and Santiago.

“When a military Power overseas attacked the cause of universal freedom in the world, Pershing with his boys in khaki, and Benson with his boys in blue, carried that flag to the forefront of the battle line; and today, side by side with the banners of England, martyred Belgium, gallant Italy, and unconquerable France, it waves defiance to the foe. It kisses the poppies of Flanders and to the lilies of France it whispers ‘Lafayette, we are here.’ In asking, therefore, the God of Truth and Justice to bless this flag, we offer Him no indignity. As He loves the right, He must love Old Glory, and therefore we ask Him to re-adorn it with victory.





SISTERS OF UNIT No. 2—THE ONLY SISTERS OF THE A. E. F.

Seated from left to right: Sister's Valeria, Catherine, Desires, M. David, Angela, Agatha, Florence.  
 Left to right: Sister's Lucia, Chrysostom, Mariona.



"Ours, too, is the performance of another duty, it is to speak the briefest, yet the hardest of all words to utter, the word of final farewell. Had I the gift of eloquence, I would pour into that word, as into a casket of alabaster, all the love, all the affection, all the sad sweet smiles, all the 'God be with you until we meet again,' of your loved ones back home. Through the gates of memory you have left ajar, I seem to see your old home town—the streets guarded by sentinels of maple, oak, and elm; the cottage of white, with lattice of climbing roses; and in the door, her dear face looking sweetly sad yet bravely, towards you, the mother who kissed you as you turned to go. Tenderly she hung the service flag in the window; bravely will she wait and pray beside the vacant chair.

"Many of you have come from the dear old Southland; and there seems to come to me now, floating down the valley of dreams, the song old mammy used to sing:

" 'I hear the children calling  
I see their sad tears falling,  
My heart turns back to Dixie  
And I must go.'

“Yes, my dear Sisters and nurses, you must go. There is need of you over there. Our Country’s heroes are there, bleeding and dying, and they need you, beloved angels of mercy, to bind their wounds. In the cities, the academies and hospitals from which you came, there are those who would love to be with you on this mighty errand of National Service. The Providence of God has chosen you, however, for the work, and not them. As of old, on the shores of Galilee, the God of Mercy commissioned His chosen followers to carry into the broad world His blessing, even so from these shores of the Atlantic He is sending you forth on your mission of love.

“From yonder tabernacle, He stoops to each one of you and sweetly whispers: ‘My daughter of the crimson Cross, of the faithful soul, of the clean heart, and skillful hand, I am sending you over there as My own representative. I know you will not fail Me, and that even unto death you will be true to the Cross and Flag that go before you!’ The Nation is proud of you and you are the holiest and best offering of our Country to the cause.

“And thus be it ever when freemen shall  
stand

Between their loved home and wild war’s  
desolation.

Blest with victory and peace, may the  
heav’n rescued land

Praise the Power that has made and pre-  
served us a nation.

Then conquer we must, since our cause it is  
just,

And this be our motto, ‘In God is our  
Trust!’

And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph  
shall wave

O’er the land of the free and home of the  
brave.”

As Base Hospital 102 is vested with the proud distinction of comprising on its roster the only Sisters accompanying the American Expeditionary Forces, it may be here permitted to anticipate and insert a brief account of its heroic personnel and their splendid service.

Its Chief Nurse was Sister Chrysostom Moynahan of Mullanphy Hospital, Saint Louis, Missouri; Sister Agatha Muldoon, Sister Angela

Drendel, Sister Catherine Coleman, and Sister Florence Means were from the Sisters of Charity Hospital, New Orleans. Sister De Sales Loftus and Sister David Ingram were from the City Hospital, Mobile, Ala. Sister Lucia Dolan, St. Mary's Hospital, Evansville, Ind. Sister Mariana Flynn, St. Joseph Hospital, St. Joseph, Mo., and Sister Valeria Dorn, St. Vincent Hospital, Sherman, Mo. The ninety nurses were graduates of the various nurses' schools connected with the hospitals in charge of the Sisters of Charity.

They took the oath of allegiance July 2, 1918, and reported at New York on July 4. There they were equipped by the Red Cross with uniforms for overseas duty and were given the necessary military training by an army officer.

The officers and enlisted men, of whom there were thirty-six of the former and two hundred of the latter, in charge of Dr. Dana, reported at Fort McHenry, and when they were ready the Sisters and nurses joined them there. Its chaplain was the Rev. Godfrey P. Hunt, O. F. M., of Washington, D. C.

Thus completed, the unit sailed August 4 on



the Umbria, which ship was afterward lost with Italian troops in the Adriatic. The second day out the work of the unit began, when fifteen men, who had been struggling with the waves in a row boat for twenty-four hours, were picked up. They belonged to the O. A. Jennings, oil tank, which had been torpedoed. They were given treatment by the unit, which turned back with them for a day's journey; then, given supplies, they were started toward land, which was in sight. The gratitude of the rescued men amply rewarded the unit for its work of mercy.

The Umbria was without convoy, and though in one night alone it received fourteen warnings of submarines, it threaded its perilous way in safety, and on August 18 reached Gibraltar, where a stop of three days was made. The officers and nurses were given shore leave, and put in their time visiting places of interest.

On August 21 the start for Genoa was made, which port was reached on the 27th. The American Ambulance Corps, with a band of music, met the unit at the boat, and Italian officers went aboard to greet the Americans in the name of the Italian Government. The Sisters and nurses

were taken to the Victoria Hotel, while the commanding officer, Colonel Hume of Frankfort, Ky., and Lieutenant Colonel Dana, went to Rome to secure a place at the front for the base hospital.

The place selected was Vicenza, about fifteen miles from the firing line. It was located in the Rossi Industrial School, which in olden days had been a Dominican convent.

Here for seven months the Americans carried on their work of mercy and during that time three thousand patients were cared for, of which number only twenty-eight were lost, and they were victims of the influenza, which was very severe in that locality. It was a remarkable record, the lowest loss of any of the American units. The 332d regiment of Ohio boys was in the section. The Ambulance Corp, composed chiefly of college men, did excellent work. The Sisters found the Italians very grateful, and their admiration for the Americans was great. There were many gas cases, and while hundreds had their eyes badly burned, such was the success attending the treatment they received, not one patient suffered the loss of his sight. A great

deal of good was also done by the Sisters and the chaplain in bringing back neglectful soldiers to their religious duty.

On several occasions air raids threatened the town, but as the Italian aviation force was superior to that of the enemy, no injury was done, although earlier in the year Vicenza had suffered severe bombardments.

As the work increased a second hospital was opened for Italians for medical cases exclusively. Besides Italian and American soldiers, British soldiers were also treated at the base hospital.

The signing of the armistice was joyfully celebrated in Vicenza, and so keenly did the Italian people recognize that the ending of the war was largely due to America, it was a common occurrence for American soldiers to be caught up and carried in triumph through the streets by the emotional Italians.

As their work grew lighter, leaves of absence were given the hard-working Sisters and nurses. During one of these the Sisters visited Rome, and had the happiness of assisting at the Mass of the Holy Father and receiving Holy Com-

munion from him. Later they were received in private audience by the Pope. The Sisters had also the pleasure of visiting the mother-house of their Order in Paris. It was while there they were ordered to proceed to Genoa for embarkation.

They sailed from Genoa March 21 for Marseilles, where they were joined by several American officers and nurses who had served in France, arriving in New York April 4.

While they were the only Sisters with the A. E. F., still they found everywhere abroad Sisters doing their share of work. One band of Italian Sisters of Charity walked sixty-five miles with a retreating force. They were in the war since its beginning. This is not only true of the Italian Sisters, but also of the French and Belgian, and presumably of those in the enemy countries. The American Sisters were glad of the opportunity to give their service in this war, in which their country was engaged, as they have done their part in the other wars of the Republic.

I had made known to good Bishop Hayes my decided preference for a combat force, and have



SEVENTH DIVISION TROOPS BOARDING LEVIATHAN AT HOBOKEN.





always felt he favored me, for, on July 30, the message from the War Department came: "Report at once to Officer Commanding Seventh Division, Camp Merritt, New Jersey."

Good Father Dinneen, the Bishop's Secretary, added to my joy by venturing opinion, that the "Seventh" was about to sail! He also generously equipped me financially—"Just a little pin money for you," as he charmingly expressed it.

What magnificent men these priests of St. Stephen's and the Ordinariate! How worthy to be associated with the Bishop who so kindly, so wisely, and so well cared for the Chaplains in the National service.

Reporting at once to Camp Merritt I entered upon my Army duties.

## CHAPTER III

### CAMP MERRITT—LEVIATHAN—AT SEA

The gallant Seventh Division, destined to render a service well worthy of Old Glory, was then commanded by Brigadier General Baarth with Col. W. W. Taylor, Jr., Chief of Staff, and Col. John Alton Degan, Adjutant.

It comprised the 34th, 55th, 56th and 64th Regiments of Infantry; the 6th and 7th Regiments of Field Artillery; 19th, 20th and 21st Machine Gun Battalions, 10th Field Signal Battalion and Divisional Sanitary and Supply Trains, with a complete field equipment of 32,000 men.

The Chaplain's Corps of the Seventh comprised Rev. Fathers Martin and Trainor, and Rev. Messrs. Cohee, Rixey, Hockman and Evans. Fathers Gwyer and LeMay joined in France. All these Chaplains rendered a brave and excellent service, meriting the respect and confidence of officers and men alike.

Departure of that mighty fighting force from Camp Merritt was deeply impressive. At the midnight hour of the First Friday in August, Mass was said for the last time, and hundreds of the boys received Holy Communion. Within an hour all were on the march, under full pack, along the country road, leading to the Palisades of the Hudson.

The night was densely dark, and grimly each soldier trudged along, guided only by the bobbing pack of the comrade in front of him. Chill gray dawn saw the head of the column emerge from the hills at a secluded point on the Jersey shore, where waiting ferry boats were boarded, which conveyed us to the wharf of the Leviathan at Hoboken.

How thrilled we were to find this giant of all the seven assigned to carry us "Over There!" Nine hundred feet long, one hundred feet wide, thirty-six feet draft and nine stories deep! Like some fabled monster of the sea, which well her weird camouflaged sides suggested, she opened her cavernous jaws and received as but a morsel thirteen thousand men.

Here was our first contact with the gallant

Navy—here did the mighty tide of khaki gold merge with the deep sea blue of heroes.

“Columbia loves to name  
Whose deeds shall live in story  
And everlasting fame.”

Leaning nonchalantly on the rail of their mighty ship, the Jackies, all perfect specimens of young American manhood, quietly watched us march aboard. We were as novel to them as they to us, yet what confidence they inspired! Curiously yet kindly they looked us over, approvingly observed the long orderly lines of our glittering rifles stretching away through the dim sheds, and seemed to say, “You are worth while fellows!—we’ll take you over all right, all right, for our little old Uncle Sam!”

To quarter, feed, and sleep 32,000 men; to carry them across 3,000 miles of angry pathless sea, where lurked the deadly mine, and prowled, as panthers of the deep, the submarines—this was the task assigned to the Leviathan and our convoy ships, the Northern Pacific and the Northland. How well our superb Navy “carried on” not only for us but for seventy times our

number, let the most brilliant pages of seafaring annals tell!

With perfect co-ordination between our Army and the ship authorities, all troops, equipment, and provisions were aboard within ten hours; and promptly at three o'clock the following afternoon the Leviathan swung out from her pier on the North River and headed seaward.

In serried ranks, silent and still as at attention, the troops lined both sides of the upper and lower decks. As at the funeral of Sir John Moore "not a drum was heard," for who can cheer at the thought of dear ones left behind, with the kiss of fond farewell still lingering in loving memory on the lip, with the soldier's requiem echoing through lonely hearts:

"Farewell, mother, you may never

Press me to your heart again;

When upon the field of battle

I'll be numbered with the slain."

As we passed down the city front, every building, on both the New York and Jersey sides, burst into color; handkerchiefs signaled a last farewell; and out of the mists of our tears

seemed to rise a mighty rainbow, spanning ship and receding shores, and spelling in letters of heavenly hue, "God be with you till we meet again."

With destroyers ahead, astern, and on the beam, two hydroplanes circling and paralleling above, and a solitary observing balloon hovering over the Long Island shore, our ship and convoys stood boldly out to sea.

We were now in the war zone, easily within range of hidden mines and torpedoes, and, like the charger who scents the battle from afar, we thrilled and were glad with the thought of daring deeds before us.

The ship Chaplain was good Father McDonald, Captain United States Navy, one of the most beloved and notable figures of the war. Every evening at the sunset hour he would go to the bridge. The Commander of the *Leviathan*, Captain Bryan, together with his staff, would be there assembled; and, as the last rays of the sun sank beneath the waves, every soldier and sailor on board would stand rigidly at attention and offer prayer as Father McDonald would raise his hand in absolution and benediction.



How near God seemed in that vast, horizon-wide cathedral of the sea! Its vaulting dome more radiant than St. Peter's sculptured prayer; its altar, clothed with the lace of ocean foam; its pavement strewn with silvery sheen; its sanctuary light the candelabra of the stars. "I will lead thee into solitude and there I will speak to thy soul." God, Eternity, and Things Divine were here made real; and to each lonely boy wrapped in blanket on the dark cold deck, there came the message that:

"Far on the deep there are billows  
That never shall break on the beach;  
And I have had thoughts in the silence  
That never shall float into speech."

A town of 13,000 population, ashore, is one thing—at sea, it is something else! First of all the question of clothing, most young men back home are fastidious—here all must wear the life preserver style trimmed à la canteen, which means our canteen, filled with water ration, must be our inseparable companion—very much attached to us, as it were.

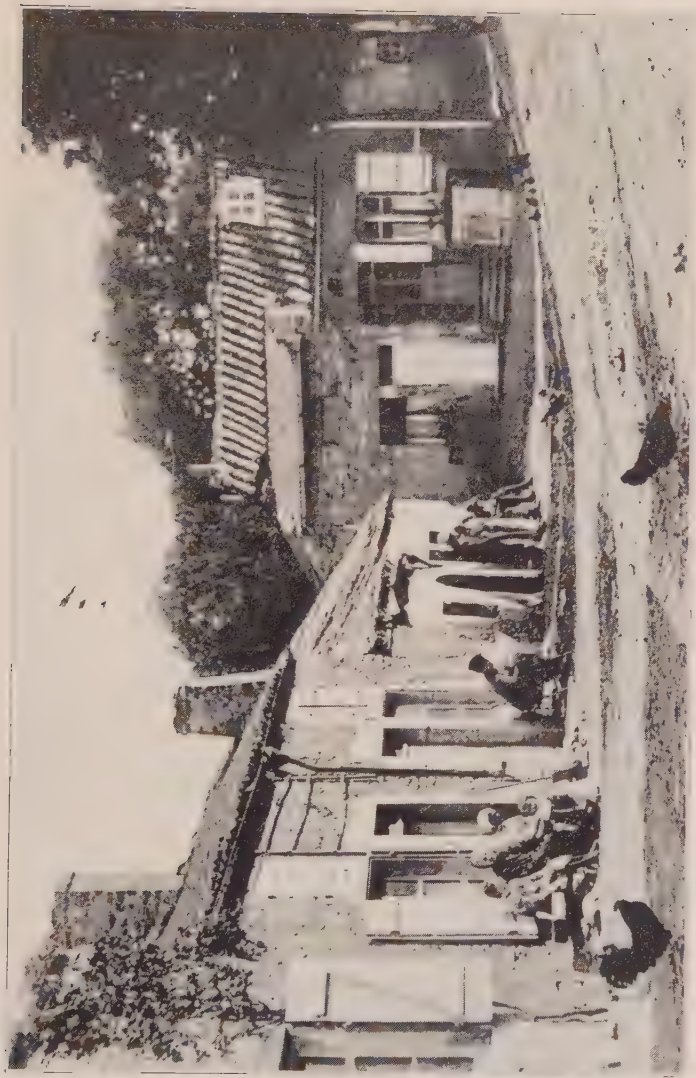
On shore, juvenile America spends his eve-

nings downtown; here, he must remain at home—indoors, if you please, not even deck promenades being permitted. Again, to the average young man, the disposition of cigarette butts is of little concern—m'lady's best parlor centerpiece, polished floor or cherished urn usually preferred; woe betide the luckless Buddie who denies his poor dead fag decent burial in the ubiquitous spit kit! To throw butts, gum wrappers, matches or anything but glances overboard, clew to the vulture eye of the lurking submarine, was a positive court martial offense. It was beginning to be evident that Sherman was right!

Yet all went well; and that indomitable humor which ever characterized our boys, which rose superior to all hardship and danger, and smiled in the very face of Death, made tolerable, if not happy, those seven thrilling days at sea. "Some swell place" would be Buddie's comment on the tossing waves of mid-Atlantic; and usually having been well, and not used to see sickness, he was easily prone to seasickness!

One day private Barry, 64th Infantry, came to me. "Chaplain, I am in great trouble! Before leaving Camp Merritt my best girl and

IN RUE DE BELGRADE—LULL BEFORE BATTLE.





her mother called to see me off, came from away back home to say good-bye. Now I am not satisfied with the details of that parting; I am just crazy about the girl, and what worries me is the thought that, in the excitement of leaving, I may not have made it perfectly clear to her how much I really love her. Now, Chaplain, I want you to write her a letter, make it good and strong, and tell her how much I love her. Will you do that?"

What else was I to do? I was his Chaplain, his big brother, friend and pal. His comrade in arms, climbing with him even then the road to Calvary's hill! "Sure thing—leave it to me, old man—but say, tell me, just how did you act and what did you say to her in parting?"

He told me. "Well, that looks pretty convincing; I think she saw you loved her all right—however, I will write the letter provided you help me."

We sat down on a coil of rope and together wrote the letter, collaborating in the most unique, most compelling, missive ever written on board the Leviathan!

How he treasured that letter! How carefully

he guarded it, how prayerfully, in due time he followed its journey from Ponteneuson Barracks, Brest, back to Chicago. Was it successful? Here's to you, Barry, old top, now happily married, in your snug little home in old Chi—and my best regards to Mrs. Barry.

One day in mid-ocean, with a fresh gale blowing abeam, and the three troopships rolling and throwing spray high in the air from a heavy white-capped sea, the cry rang out "man overboard from the Northern Pacific!" A soldier had slipped on the watery deck; and, before his mates could reach him, was overboard.

Alarm was at once sounded, lifebuoys thrown toward him, the vessels came about and circled diligently around, but no sign was seen of him. His untimely and tragic death deeply affected us all; and though the ocean was his grave and the spume of the sea his shroud, his memory abides with us in the sanctuary of our prayers.

On the morning of the sixth day, a flotilla of destroyers bore down on us. So apparently from nowhere did they come, we were tempted to believe they rose from the depths of the sea. How thrilled we were to see those six greyhound terrors of the submarine take position around us—



one ahead, one astern, and two on each beam.

It was now full speed ahead on a zigzag course. We were in the most deadly submarine infested zone of the ocean. Only yesterday the *Susquehanna* had been torpedoed in these very waters, and, no doubt, the same evil periscopes were watching us now from beyond yonder kopje of a wave! Our temples throbbed poundingly; our throats grew dry, our eyes stared straight ahead—the same psychic phenomena we were to note in ourselves, even more accentuated, later in the trenches. What a prize we would be—to sink the largest ship afloat, with the greatest human cargo, 13,000 souls, that ever put to sea!

It was, as it were, an old-time, nerve-racking ninth inning at the White Sox grounds! A clean single will tie, a double will beat us. Uncle Sam's Navy is in the box; Von Tirpitz's best sticker is at the bat. Two strikes have been called. What will the next be?

A sudden hush grips the watching thousands. Here it comes—the batter swings with terrific force—"Strike three, you're out!" and proudly our gallant Armada sweeps into the welcoming and sheltering harbor of Brest!

## CHAPTER IV

### BREST—ANCEY-LE-FRANC

Vive la France! With all the emotion that must have thrilled the heart of Lafayette, sailing up the Chesapeake to Washington's assistance at Yorktown, we gazed on the rugged coast of Brittany. Our convoy alone, if you will, more than compensated, in point of *number of troops* at least, for the 20,000 who wore the fleur-de-lis at the surrender of Cornwallis. Mere *number* of troops, however, was not the question—it was all we then needed. France would, no doubt, have sent us more in 1783, even as we would have sent more to her in the world war, had there been the need.

Brest was the only harbor along the western France coast with sufficient depth of water to accommodate the Leviathan; and, inside her breakwater, on Sunday, August 10, we dropped anchor.

This harbor and city, with a history rich in recorded and traditional lore, antedated the

Christian era. The Phœnician, the Carthaginian, the Roman, and the Frank, had each, in turn, left upon its sheltering bay and rock hewn hills the impress of his generation.

Apart and aloof from the beaten paths that lead from London to Paris it held, through the centuries, "the even tenor of its way."

Here had the painter ever found color and form for his canvas; the romanticist, theme and character for his story. In the deep-voiced caverns of these towering cliffs lived the Pirates of Penzance. The solitude of yonder St. Malo inspired Chateaubriand with his immortal "Monks of the West"; and Morliix, just east of Brest, was, in days of peace, the dwelling place of peerless Marshal Foch.

By nightfall all the troops had been ferried to the wharfs and formed by companies in the railroad yards along the water front.

Promptly at five o'clock, with headquarters troop at the head of the column, Colonel Taylor and all officers on foot, we began our march to Ponteneuson Barracks. Each of us, on leaving the Leviathan, had been rationed with a sandwich. We had hoped to dejeuner on the wharf

before beginning the march, but such was not our good fortune—the single sandwich was all the food—or drink for that matter—we tasted until ten o'clock the following morning.

The march of eight torturous, hill-climbing, miles, while exhausting in the extreme, was not without interest. It brought us within seeing and speaking distance of the inhabitants. A group of little boys and girls trudged along at our side singing what they no doubt believed to be our Marseillaise, "Cheer, cheer, the gang's all here." The shrill voices of these petit garçons expressed our only bienvenue to France!

Their elders, in their quaint Breton Sunday costumes, sitting on doorsteps or grouped along the roadsides, viewed us interestedly, but quietly and without demonstration. Although it was the highway used by thousands of American troops passing through Brest, we heard no word of cheer, nor saw a single banner of welcome in those eight weary miles of back torture under full packs.

At nine o'clock we arrived at Ponteneuson. Well might this place be called, at least at that time, the vestibule of hell! If there is any boy

of the A. E. F. who has anything good to say—or the slightest happy memory to recall—of Ponteneuson, I have yet to meet him.

It was officially called a “Rest Camp”—where we might recuperate from our long confinement on shipboard. But if lying hungry and cold on the fog-drenched rocks of Brittany, with a chill wind sweeping up from the neighboring ocean, freezing the very marrow of one’s aching bones, be considered rest, it was a kind entirely new to us.

Lying near me on the chill ground that night was Major Winthrop Whittington of Cleveland, Ohio, one of the most efficient, kindest and wittiest of our officers, and who later served as our Chief of Staff. Someone had just remarked that Napoleon used frequently to come to Ponteneuson. “That explains,” quietly remarked the Major, “the three-hour sleep theory held by Napoleon—(sufficient for any man) ; three hours is all any man could sleep in such a hell of a place.”

How we survived that night and the following six days and nights can only be ascribed to that merciful dispensation of God which has carried

us through many a trial. Our habitation was now the open field, drenched in a dust storm that blew constantly. We sat on the roadside and ate our meager fare, making joke and jest of our utter lack of comfort.

Immediately adjacent to us was the guard house, a prison camp, pitched in the open field, and surrounded by barbwire fencing. The only shelter these wretched boys had—they were all Americans—were holes they had burrowed in the ground and little shacks they had constructed from odd pieces of boards they had found. Through the days and nights the chorus of their angry, cursing voices was borne to our ears on the howling wind.

One day we were hurried into formation and sent past the reviewing stand. President Poincare of France was paying us a call. His motor car, escorted by an outriding troop of French cavalry, and heralded by shrill bugle calls, came whirling into our midst on the wings of a dust cloud.

Alighting in front of the improvised reviewing stand, he immediately became the center of an animated group; the khaki of our camp offi-





TAPS AND FAREWELL VOLLEYS FOR OUR HEROIC DEAD.



cers mingling with the blue, red and gold of the French. No time was lost by the little man in black suit and cravat in starting the review. The long lines of our doughboys, their rifles, with fixed bayonets, flashing and dazzling in the rays of the setting sun, swept by like some rushing, splashing Niagara torrent. The review was evidence, at least, as to our number, stamina and equipment.

The following morning, a full hour before the dawn, we were quietly aroused, ordered to roll our blanket packs and get into line. Glorious news! We were on the move, starting for our training area and thence into the fighting lines! Within forty minutes we were on the march, leaving Ponteneuson, as we had entered it, under cover of the night.

Our immediate destination was the railroad yards at Brest, where we would find our trains. Those wretched days of exposure, lack of food and sleep greatly weakened many. Chaplain Kerr, who had entered the service with me at Governor's Island, New York, died of pneumonia, and was buried at Brest. Although frequent halts for rest were made, many of the

troops fell out and were carried to the First Aid Stations.

How shall I describe the cars that carried our boys from the sea coast towns to the fighting fronts of France? Each car, plainly marked "Hommes 20, Chevals 8," offered equal accommodations for 20 men or 8 horses—especially were they equipped for the comfort of horses. It was sans air brake and sans spring; and when the engineer made up his mind, which he often did, to stop that train, he did so in a manner the most alarming to aching limbs and weary eyes. "Let's go," the soldiers' war cry, rang out along the creaking, swaying, grinding train, and we were off on our 400-mile journey to the training area assigned to our Division somewhere in France.

How we enjoyed, at least, our eyesight on that journey! The appeal to the eye was constant—the color and form of scenes unfamiliar offering views of compelling attraction and delight. Each unadorned car window and door became the frame of pictures not a Millet nor a Rembrandt could depict.


The villages, their sturdy houses of gray stone

and red tile roofs; their streets, transformed from "routes" to "rules," where country roads came to town; their shopping squares stirred to enterprise by signs of "Boulangerie," "Boucherie," "Cafe" and "Menier Chocolat." Towering over all, the never-failing church, its lofty, cross-surmounted tower, giving to the scene tone and character.

Rolling fields, aglow with harvest gold of wheat, oats and rye; orchards, teeming with luscious fruit ready to be gathered; rivers, threading their silvery way through meadow and wood; splendid roads, binding the beauteous bouquet of landscape with ribbons of silky white.

The outstanding feature of that three-day journey was the apparent utter lack of enthusiasm on the part of a supposedly demonstrative people.

Waiting at crossroads or railway stations, they would look at us in that same quiet, observing manner we had noticed at Brest. We passed through Morlix, home city of Foch; Versailles, and Sennes; and at no place did we hear so much as a single cheer. There were no welfare workers at any point, and if "Cafes" were numerous, we always paid well for our wine, bread and "cafe au lait."



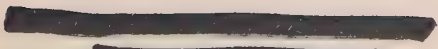
Coming from our own beloved America, where welfare workers greeted and feted us at every station, this apparent lack of hospitality more noticeable was difficult to understand. Possibly their impoverished condition forbade the refreshment part; but cheers and vives are possible, even to the poorest!

Tuesday morning, August 19th, found us paralleling the picturesque river Yonne, which waters the vine-clad valleys of Burgundy. The sound of big gun firing had reached us in the early dawn, and we were all a-thrill at the thought of mighty things impending. Vaguely the words "Toul," "St. Mihiel," "Verdun," and "Metz," had filtered back from the flaming front; and, like hounds tugging at the leash, we were eager for the fray.

At high noon we reached the quaint old town of Ancy-le-Franc, Department of Yonne. Here we left the train and drew up in formation along the roads and back through the lanes and fields. On the platform of the "gare" our gallant Division Commander, Brigadier General Baarth, attended by his staff, who had come on ahead of us by way of Paris, greeted us warmly and re-



viewed the troops. We were the first American soldiers to enter this area, and the village folks of Ancey-le-Franc, Shacenyelles, Fontenoy, and Nuites sur Yonne, welcomed us to their humble homes, barns and fields where we were to be billeted, with simple and cordial hospitality.



## CHAPTER V

### IN BILLETS—DEPARTURE FOR FRONT

Stepping from the train into the streets of Ancey-le-Franc was verily performing a miracle—with a single stride we were out of the twentieth century and into the eighteenth! We were among our contemporary ancestors, far on the road to yester century. Not a building under at least one hundred years of age—not a street but trodden by the Crusaders of St. Louis—the church of St. Sebastian dated 1673; and the Chateau, founded in 1275, by that hardy old Knight of Malta, Duke de Clermont Tonnere.

With characteristic good humor, ingenuity and tact, officers and men adjusted themselves to their unusual surroundings, merging into the various billets allotted to them, along lines of least resistance. By nightfall Buddie owned the town! Meriting it by sheer force of good nature, gentlemanly deportment, and a willingness to follow the adage of the ancient poet: "*Si fueris Romae Romano vivite more.*"

Mine was the rare good fortune of being assigned to No. 10 Rue de Belgrade. Here, through many generations, had stood the house of Barnicault. Michel Barnicault, present head of the family, welcomed me most cordially. He felt it indeed an honor to have as his guest Monsieur le Chaplain, Americaine Soldat! In the evening he would sit in front of his venerable home, smoking his pipe and looking with pride at my Chaplain flag of blue and white that hung above the door.

Petit garçon Andree, aged six years, had always considered his Grandfather Michel the greatest man in the world; then I came into his life; and whether it was I, or the American bon bons I lavished on him, or the overseas chapeau I let him strut about in now and then, I completely won his little heart. Darling little Andree in far off Ancey-le-Franc, now eight going on nine, I salute you!

Monsieur le Cure of the village church welcomed me cordially. Daily I said Mass on the altar of St. Anne.

As we might go into the front trenches now any day, the Chaplains' ministerial work grew

apace. "Be ye always ready you know not the day nor the hour." Father Martin was with the 56th Infantry at Molsme; Father Trainor with the Machine Gunners at Ceneboy-le-Bas; and I, with all other Divisional Units, with Headquarters at Ancy-le-Franc. Three priests among 32,000 men, 48 per cent of whom were Catholic. The other Chaplains were distributed: Chaplain Cohee, Christian, with the 34th Infantry. (Mr. Cohee won the Distinguished Service Medal for gallantry under fire at Vieville-en-Haye.) Chaplain Hockman, Lutheran, 55th Infantry. Chaplain Webster, Episcopalian, 7th Engineers. Chaplain Rixey, Methodist, 64th Infantry. Chaplain Evans, Baptist, Sanitary Trains.

At this time we gave an old-fashioned Mission in the village church. A choir was organized from the Headquarters Troop, and each evening we would have Rosary, Sermon and Benediction. A special memorandum, signed by Colonel Degan, setting forth the purpose and advantages of the Mission, was posted throughout the District. The villagers likewise attended and the church was always filled. At this time,

casting all fear aside, I boldly plunged into my first public speaking in French! I felt that grand-pere Barnicault and petit Andree would at least be on my side in case of a riot. Much to my delight the populace greeted my attempt approvingly and showered me with compliments.

On Sundays I would say Masses at six and eight for the troops, preaching in English. Assisting at the ten o'clock Missa, *Cantata Parochialis* was always a source of devotion and unusual interest. Promptly at 9:30 the tower bells, in triple chime, would ring out, echoing near and far, o'er meadow and hill. By path and trail and through the cobbled streets would come the people—old men and women, white with the snows of many winters; middle-aged women invariably clothed in the black of widowhood—France had then been bleeding and dying three years—fair-cheeked, dark-eyed modest maidens—type of Evangeline of Grand-Pre—handsome little boys and girls, the kind with which Raphael frames his Madonnas. Kneeling for a little prayer at the grave sides in the church yard—pleasantly exchanging with neighbors the “bon jour” and the “bonheur”—they make their way

into the church, up the aisles chiseled by Time itself, to the pew generations of their name have worshiped in.

Mass is beginning. At the head of the procession, emerging from the Sacristy, marches the Master of Ceremonies, a venerable man of patriarchal mien, clothed in quaint cassock of black velvet, richly trimmed with silver braid, resonantly striking the stone pavement with official staff and responding in aged, yet pleasing voice to the Gregorian Chant of Celebrant and Congregation. Handsome little boys—all garçons are handsome—in acolytical splendor of purple and cardinal, with the daintiest of "calottes," come singing their way into your heart in a way to delight our own Father Finn of the Paulist choristers. The village cure—Monsignor of the Diocese of Sens—in those rich full tones that centuries of congregational singing have given to France, gives voice to the Ceremonial Beauty "ever ancient yet ever new." Very little need, there, for books; most young and old sing Introit, Credo, Preface and Agnus Dei from memory, artistically exact in pronunciation, expression and tempo.

If there was distraction for our troops at all, it was perhaps at the collection. Not that the giving of their centimes or francs was distracting, rather was it the manner of Collection à la Française. It is taken up by the most handsome young ladies of the congregation—our American Tag Days were perhaps suggested by it. Marching before the Mademoiselles and striking sharply on the pavement with his staff, solemnly comes the aged Master of Ceremonies. No prayers so absorbing nor slumber so profound, but the anvil clang of his staff will arouse. A hand embroidered silken bag is handed to you in the most charming manner. What Buddie could resist such appeal?

It was during our days in this area I was appointed Division Burial Officer—undertaker for the entire Division. The order, duly bulletined, at first shocked me—what qualifications had I for a work so unusual? However, I promptly accepted it for reasons twofold: First, it is not the part of a soldier to question the wisdom of orders, and, second, anything and everything done for Old Glory is an honor. Jealously I raided the archives of the Personnel Depart-



ment at Headquarters, my "towney" Captain Brown of Grand Haven, Michigan, helping me, and studied all Orders and Bulletins bearing on the subject, "how to identify, register and bury the dead." The responsibility was indeed weighty and the work vast—to organize, equip and drill burial details; to bury our own dead, all enemy dead and horses; to assemble personal effects and identification tags found on the persons of the deceased; to bathe, clothe and prepare bodies for burial; to furnish coffins, gravediggers, firing squads and buglers. Daily report of all burials was to be made to the Graves' Registration Service at Chaumont. It can easily be realized how important this work became as we grew nearer the fighting front. On battlefields, drenched with deadly gas, under fire and amid conditions and scenes most revolting and appalling, the burial parties worked, usually in gas masks for protection against odors and fumes.

Physical exhaustion, occasioned by exposure at Brest, the fatiguing journey across France, and the forced march of many kilometers, under full pack, from rail heads to billets, accounted

for the numerous pneumonia cases that now appeared. In the unsettled, formative condition of things, we were not prepared to fully cope with the situation. Our nearest United States Base Hospital was at Dijon, sixty kilometers distant; and to this point it became necessary to send such of the seriously ill as could be safely transported. Many, however, were too weak to undertake such a journey; and, as no suitable buildings were available, the situation became truly distressing. There was not a single Army corps nurse or welfare worker of any sort within miles of us, and the critical nature of it all can be more readily imagined than described. Our doctors and corpsmen of the Sanitary Regiment did everything possible and rendered admirable service; but what could even the best intentioned do without equipment? On September 5th, I took mess with two of our best physicians, Captain O'Malley of Mercy Hospital, Chicago, and Lieutenant Poole of South Carolina. One week later I buried the Lieutenant at Longre, a victim of pneumonia, following an illness of but four days.

Four French Sisters of Charity now came

most providentially to our assistance. The unjust and stupid Association Laws of France had, shortly before the war, forbidden them the right of teaching. Later they had returned and converted the old building, their former school, into a hospital. With its four spacious classrooms and pretty garden in the rear, it easily lent itself to the purpose. Under the able direction of Doctor Thiery, who was at that time mayor of the village, and whose soldier son had been killed at St. Quentin, emergency medical and surgical cases received there a care that, no doubt, saved many lives. Our own Army doctors were at once incorporated in this improvised hospital's staff, with corpsmen assigned to duty in its wards.

How wonderfully inventive and skillful Love becomes under the inspiration of Religion! The humble Sisters who, in days of peace, had dedicated their virgin lives to Education, a spiritual Work of Mercy, now, under the stress of war, directed those same self-sacrificing energies to Nursing, a corporal Work of Mercy, sanctioned by Him who is the world's first Good Samaritan. Though not able to utter a single English

word, their kindness spoke eloquently for them in those numerous little ways a gentle woman has of assuaging pain and soothing even "the dull cold ear of Death." The Mother Superior, by simply removing two or three pieces of furniture, converted her office into the hospital morgue; and here, assisted by the corpsmen, I prepared the bodies of my dear boys for burial. How my heart ached to see them die! In the loneliness and seclusion of those whitewashed classrooms, far removed from any sight or association that spoke of Home; to see the light of their lives burn out, and the flowers of Spring displaced by the snows of Winter!

To me their deaths, amid the uninspiring surroundings of that wayside hospital, took on a grandeur and sublimity all surpassing.

Far easier, indeed, would it have been for them to die on field of battle, with cheer of comrades following their flight of soul. That ward was a braver field! For there they died bereft of all that inspires, and with no pomp or thrill of war to make glad their chivalrous souls.

The village carpenter was never so busy. Reinforcing his working staff, he set speedily to

work building coffins. These he made of plain pine boards, staining them to a dull brown, and furnishing with each a cross and marking stake. Thirty-two of these it was my sad duty to provide and distribute during our stay in Burgundy.

We soon outgrew the old churchyard at Ancey-le-Franc; and the good Cure and Monseigneur le Docteur Thiery of the local hospital, set aside for us ground for another cemetery just outside the village. We enclosed this with a white picket fence and felt confident, when we marched away, that the graves of our brave boys there resting, would always be tenderly cared for by the devoted people.

“On Fame’s eternal camping ground  
Their silent tents are spread,  
And Glory guards with solemn round  
The bivouac of the Dead.”

At the place of honor, just inside that “God’s Acre,” I buried Sergeant Omer Talbot of Kansas City, Kansas, one of the bravest and most beloved of Headquarters Troop, who received the last Sacraments, and died in my arms.



THE BATTLE SWEPT ROADSIDE WAS SANCTUARY AND CHOIR.





Our burials were always religiously attended by the villagers. A French veteran would go through the streets sounding his drum and giving early notice of the burial of an American soldier. The people would gather at the church, the farmer from the field, the artisan from the shop, all dressed as for Sunday. The cure, the mayor, the councilmen, the town major, all would be present. On foot, bearing flowers, they would follow the military cortège to the cemetery. There, following the Benedictus, the mayor would give an impassioned address, expressing the profound appreciation of France for the service and sacrifice of the gallant American soldiers. His closing words, repeated and echoed through the cemetery by the multitude, would be, "Vive l'Amerique! Vive Pershing! Vive Wilson!"

Among the most devoted attendants at our funerals were Monseieur and Madame Moidrey and their beautiful daughter Annette, a girl of sixteen years. In rain and shine they came, always with flowers most beautiful to place upon coffin and grave.

Returning one day from the cemetery, Mon-

seieur respectfully addressed me—"If it would please Monseieur le Chaplain to ever visit our home (they lived just inside the village in a quaint old manor house I had often admired), we would consider it an honor indeed to entertain Monseieur le Chaplain and his friends," then naively adding, as if by way of further inducement, "we have the only piano in the village."

Now Sergeant Eddie Quinlan, 55th Infantry, who came from South Carpenter Street, Chicago, was one of my best pals. He was then attending the Field Signal Battalion School at Shacereyelles, two kilometers away. I sent word to him, directing him to report at my billet the following evening accompanied by the ten handsomest doughboys, besides himself, in his platoon. At the appointed hour and place, the Buddies were faithfully on hand; and need I add, all were from Chicago? How proud I was of them, stalwart huskies, well groomed, brown as berries, and with muscles of iron.

"Fellows, if you have no other engagement for this evening, would you care to accompany me to the Moidrey residence, honored guests of the family? They have a piano; and I might add,

a most charming daughter of sixteen summers." Here they nearly mobbed me! "Would they go?" "Other engagements!" "Say, Father, you are not kidding us, are you?" etc., etc! By way of information permit me to here observe that these boys had been sleeping in fields then for two weeks. They had not seen the inside of an honest-to-goodness home, nor sat at a dining-table with real tablecloth, napkins or plates, since they landed in France. Neither had they heard a piano, nor been the guest of any lady, young or old—well—since they left Camp Merritt. Their over-flowing cup of joy, at this alluring prospect, can therefore easily be imagined.

As we no doubt would be invited to sing, we first rehearsed several popular songs, holding forth with a gusto that raised the roof, even of the ancient and sturdy house of Barnicault. To the air of "Old Kentucky Home," Quinlan tried out our latest, A Song of Home:

You may sing of Erin's Shannon flowing  
softly to the sea,  
The Thames where it passes London  
town;

You may boast the bonnie Clyde where it  
mingles with the tide,  
And the Seine with its romance of re-  
nown.

You may paint in blue the Danube or the  
far Italian Po,  
But of all the streams enshrined in  
memory,  
Is the good old Mississippi, that wherever  
I may go,  
Is the dearest one in all the world to me.

## CHORUS:

Then sing the song, my comrades,  
O we'll sing this song today,  
That wherever we may roam, we'll sing a  
song of home  
For the dear old Mississippi far away.

You may boast of Irish Nora, or sweet  
Bessey of Dundee,  
The charm of England's Geraldines so  
fair;  
You may choose the maids of Belgium or  
Ma'm'selles of Picardy

All famed for grace and beauty every-  
where.

But if you will but listen, and leave the  
choice to me

I'll point with pride to dear old U. S. A.  
Where there's maidens fair to see, sweet  
and dear as Liberty  
And never cloud o'ershadows beauty's  
day.

CHORUS:

Then sing this song, my comrades,  
O we'll sing this song today,  
That wherever we may roam, we'll sing a  
song of home  
For the maidens fair back home in U.  
S. A.

A trench mirror four inches by six hung on  
the wall of my billet. There was a mad scram-  
ble for a last facial and tonsorial inspection; for  
each fellow boldly made his boast, "Just watch  
me, Bo, make the hit of the evening with Ma  
chere Miss Frenchy."

Down the village street in column of twos  
we made our way.

“All gentle in peace and all valiant in war,  
There never was Knight like the young  
Lochinvar.”

As we went singing carefree, secretly my heart was sad. As a Staff Officer I knew, although the boys did not, that this was to be their last evening party; that on the morrow they were to leave for the front line trenches; that many weary days, weeks and months of stern, bitter, deadly realities lay just before them; and I wanted them to at least enjoy this one last evening of home-spun, joyful valedictory.

The Moidrey residence stood back a little from the road, protected by a tall iron fence of artistic design. As we drew near, my Minstrel Boys prudently “soft pedaled” their singing, so as not to over-alarm our kind host. Responsive to our sounding the huge brass, lion-headed knocker on the massive gate, the house door opened. Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle Annette came down the winding garden path to admit and welcome us.

Introductions followed, formal, gracious and charming. Quite true it was that our kindly hosts could not speak a word of English, nor the

Buddies of French, at least of French fit to grace the occasion. There is a language, however, that is not of the tongue, but of the heart. It is expressed in the flash, of a love-lit eye; it is felt in the pressure of a kindly hand. It is spoken and understood the world over and needs no interpreter. This language my boys spoke very fluently; and our charming hosts did them the honor to understand.

In the parlor was the wonderful piano, brought all the way from Paris. Obliging, charmingly, Mademoiselle Annette responded to our profuse, overwhelming invitations to play first. Sweet and innocent she looked sitting there; her cheeks fair as the roses in her garden, her eyes modestly aglow with star light, her raven hair in a single braid of ample length, neatly adorned with a red ribbon and bewitchingly tossed over her shoulder. Never was a young lady better guarded at a piano; five stalwart doughboys on either side, jealously turning the pages of a sheet of music that was upside down. Artistically she played and the loud applause that greeted her would have made envious our own Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler.



Our turn came next. The polite piano from Paris fairly groaned beneath the burden of our song. It was not used to such boisterous treatment. Bravely it struggled on "The Long, Long Trail A-winding." It galloped "Over There." It wailed bitterly "I'm Sorry, Dear," and it did its bravest to "Keep the Home Fires Burning."

When, finally, the barrage of music lifted, we made our way to the line of attack at the spacious dining-table our hosts had meanwhile spread. How good it seemed to sit at a regular table, with tablecloth, napkins and silverware! How delicious too the sweetbreads, the salad, the fromage; and crowning all, the exquisite service of sparkling wine, vintaged in the long ago in these famed Burgundian valleys.

Call to Quarters sounded at 8:45 and "Tattoo" at 9:00. It was now time to go. Cordially each boy thanked our gracious hosts. "And should I live a thousand years I'll ne'er forget." Reverently, gallantly, devotedly, each said bon jour to darling Annette. To each she represented womanhood—beautiful, modest, lovable. Each saw visualized in her, as it were, his own mother, sister, sweetheart, back home. Would he ever see



THE MEN BEHIND OUR MESS AT BOUILLIONVILLE.



his own loved ones again? God only knew. And when the last good-bye was said, and the door slowly closed and we walked away into the night, the bugle call of "Taps" plaintively sounding through the quiet streets found sad and mystic echo in our souls.

Our last day in Ancy-le-Franc dawned chill and rainy. I breakfasted in the old Chateau with Senior Chaplain of the A. E. F., Bishop Brent, Episcopal Bishop of Eastern New York Diocese, who had journeyed over from Chaumont to visit us. A thorough gentleman and efficient officer was the good Bishop; and naught but the best and most cordial good will has ever characterized our relations.

It was but a few days subsequent to his visit that I received from General Pershing the special orders making me Senior Chaplain of the Seventh Division and brevet of Captaincy. For this honor I have ever been grateful to Bishop Brent and our gallant Division Commander General Baarth.

Although our sojourn with the Burgundians had been brief, the conduct of officers and men had won universal respect. Genuinely sad the

villagers were to see us fall in, that rainy afternoon, under marching orders. We had just been equipped with gas masks; and for the first time wore our prized chapeaus, the steel helmets.

Sad was the house of Barnicault! Petit Andree followed me about, weeping constantly. Madame prepared her best omelet and cafe-au-lait and Monsieur opened his most prized bottle of Burgundy. I left with them many odds and ends the zealous merchants back home in the States had thoughtfully recommended, but which stern Army regulations decried for front line use. Trunks were left behind; and all we needed we carried in our ever-faithful packs. With a last blessing to the dear old couple, kneeling sobbing at my feet, a last hug from Andree, whose fond little arms I had to forcibly release from my neck, I put on my helmet, shouldered my pack and was gone!

The rain fell in torrents; and quickly I took position in the long, waiting line. We marched at once, taking the road to Neuite-sur-Yonne; and far on our way the old church bells called sadly after us in their benison of last farewell. We never returned to Ancy-le-Franc; but to its beloved inhabitants we still live, for,

"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."

We reached our Rail Head, the main line to the regions of Meurthe-et-Moselle, at nine o'clock; and struck camp in the yards and fields for the night. As the night was chill and our camp sufficiently secure from observation, fires were kindled by the various companies. Gathered in their cheering circles of warmth and glow, the boys beguiled the hours preceding Taps, with jest and song. They sang of love and war and God; and through all their melody, as a golden thread, could be traced the thought of home, and of a Great Tomorrow! Gradually, as glow of sunset paling in the west, the fires burned low; and out of dying embers rose shadowy forms that beckoned weary eyes to the land of dreams.

To each sleeping soldier boy  
Magi dreams bring gifts of joy;  
Sweet and pure as mother love  
Brought by angels from above.

Dreams of home across the sea  
And of scenes loved tenderly,

As he left them yesterday  
When he turned and marched away.

Dreams of mother at the door  
Standing as in days of yore,  
Calling him to come from play  
At the closing of the day.

Dreams of maiden, boyhood friend,  
Down the road beyond the bend,  
Where the trees made welcome shade  
Trysting place for boy and maid.

Where he told her of his love  
Pure and true as stars above,  
And she answered with her eyes  
Beautiful as Paradise.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dream on, soldier boy of mine,  
May sweet memory entwine  
Love that thrills with hope that cheers,  
Wakening day with yester years!  
May sweet morrow's dawning beam  
Hallow and make real thy dream.



At midnight as I lay wrapped in my blanket beside the fire's expiring embers, Colonel Degan came to me and said, "I am leaving you, Chaplain. Good-bye and the best of luck." He was on his way to another sector; and although I have never seen him since, I still recall him as a splendid soldier and a devoted friend.

At Units the following morning, I said Mass and gave the Sacraments to quite a number of the boys. Among these I recall Machine Gunner Brady of the 34th Infantry, brother of my friend, Father Brady, of St. Agnes Church, Chicago.

Meanwhile the waiting trains had been boarded and promptly at noon we rolled away into the mysterious Northeast. How good it seemed to be once more on the move! The utmost caution was now to be observed—no lights on the train at night, not even a headlight on the engine. Softly the boys sang,

"We don't know where we're going,  
But we're on our way."

In monotone the steel rails seemed to plaintively reply,

“Art is long and Time is fleeting,  
And your hearts though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.”

Our afternoon hours were given something of a thrill in watching the evolutions of a half dozen planes, skirmish escort men of the air, flying high and wide covering our movements. We were now on the division of road operated by our own gallant 13th Engineers, of which my friend, Sergeant McDowell of Blue Island, was Locomotive Inspector.

Night fell; and the long troop trains like monstrous serpents creeping on their prey crawled steadily, silently forward into the abysmally black unknown. Slower and more uncertain they moved, feeling their way; and at midnight came to a final stop at the near approaches to No Man's Land. Quickly we detrained and took cover in a near-by forest; the empty cars trailed off rapidly to the south; and dawn found neither a car nor a soldier in sight. All that day we remained hidden in the shadowy solitudes of Bois l'Evque on the banks of the Moselle.

Beautiful was this softly flowing river, mirroring azure skies and radiant in the colorful glow of early autumn. How hard to realize that death lurked in the quietude of its borders; that Man had chosen this bosom of shade, tuneful with the voice of sweetly calling birds, as a fitting sham-ble to slay his fellow men!

If day for the soldier was for rest, night was for the march; and a new dawn found us in the sheltering woods of Gonderville on the Toul-Nancy highway.

Turquoise, palest violet, tender green and gold, the country lay before us. Then, even as we watched from covert, our ears made acquaintance with a new and ominous sound. From an infinite distance the morning breeze from the north carried with it a deadened thumping sound, now regular as the muffled rolling of drums, now softly irregular with intervals of stillness. It was the dominating monotone of cannonading. No need to tell the boys what it meant!

"Guess we're in time for the big show all right," Buddie quietly remarked; and from that moment an expression overspread his counte-

nance and a note crept into his voice I had not noticed there before. It was not one of nervousness, but of seriousness; a clearer vision and apprehension of big manly things henceforth to be done.

“When I was a boy I lived as a boy; but when I became a man I put away the things of boyhood and acted the part of a man.”

*Boys* went *into* the trenches, but *men* came *out* of them!



OUR DUGOUTS AFFORDED SHELTER AND HABITATION.



## CHAPTER VI

### PUVINELLE SECTOR—BOIS LE PRETRE—VIEVILLE EN HAYE

Gallant Pershing was even then maneuvering his masterly all-American offensive in the San Michel. Our Seventh Division, with the 28th on the left and the 92d on the right, now reached the high full tide of martial responsibility; merging from the reserve into the attack; and taking its place with the Immortal Combat Divisions of proud Old Glory.

The front line sector, which that night we took over, extended in a general westerly direction from north of Pont à Musson on the Moselle river to Vigneulles—a distance of ten kilometers.

Approximate positions found the 55th Infantry at Thiacourt, the 64th at Vieville, the 37th at Fay-en-Haye, and the 56th at Vilcey-sur-Trey, with Machine Gun Battalions distributed equally among them. During September, Division Headquarters was at Villers-en-Haye; mov-



ing forward in echelon to Noviant and Euvezin October 24th.

Although Villers-en-Haye was mostly in ruins, the Sacristy of the village church was in good shape, and this I at once occupied. On the preceding Sunday, good Father Harmon of Chicago had said Mass in this church, as a note, fastened to its front door, announced.

Thoroughly tired, I spread my blanket on the floor and fell quickly to sleep. I dreamed I was tied to a railroad track with a train rushing towards me. With a start I awoke, just as a siren voiced shell came screaming across the fields, bursting at the foot of the hill on which the church stood.

The gas alarm was at once sounded and every trooper sought refuge in the dugouts. It was then half-past eight. At four-minute intervals and with the most deadly regularity these shells came at us for four nerve-racking hours.

Boom! You could hear it leave the eight-inch howitzer six miles away, then in a high tenor pitch, it rushed toward you with a crescendo of sound, moaning, wailing, screaming, hissing, bursting with frightful intensity apparently in

the center of your brain. Falling here, there, and everywhere in the ruins and environs of the village, mustard gas, flying steel and mortar, levied cruel toll on six boys, whose mangled bodies I laid away the following afternoon at Griscourt under the hill. One of these, I now recall, was Corporal Donald Bryan of the 7th Engineers, a most handsome and talented young man who, before the war, had won fame in the field of movie drama.

"Where were you last night?" inquired galling Colonel Cummings of Missouri, our Machine Gun Regimental Commander.

"In the sacristy," I replied.

"The worst possible place for you!" he exclaimed; "you would find it far safer in a dug-out."

I preferred the sacristy, however, for its convenience to the altar, where I could say daily Mass, and so won my point.

Chaplain and burial work had been meanwhile growing tremendously. Burial details to be organized, equipped and dispatched far and wide along the front; conferences with Chaplains; forwarding to them of Departmental Or-

ders; receiving their weekly reports, and compiling these in daily reports to the Graves Registration Service; with monthly reports to be prepared for Bishop Brent at Chaumont, Monsignor Connolly at Paris, and Archbishop Hayes at New York.

At this time welfare workers joined us and we had thirty Y. M. C. A. secretaries under Rev. Mr. Todd; eight American Red Cross secretaries under Mr. Kolinski of Chicago; six Salvation Army lady secretaries under Adjutant Mr. Brown, and ten Knights of Columbus secretaries under Mr. McCarthy of Kansas City, who joined us at Bouillonville.

All these workers rendered most valuable and devoted service; especially at a time and place when we were far afield in ruined shell-swept areas, and completely cut off from every vestige of ordinary comforts. How good a bar of chocolate, a stick of Black Jack, a "dash" of despised inglorious "goldfish" tasted to Buddie, lying cold, hungry, dirty and "cootified" in his dugout!

A distinct contribution to modern civilization, and a form of national and international altruism making for the betterment, not only of him who

receives but as well of him who gives, was organized welfare work. The need of such work always existed; and the organization of trained and equipped auxiliary forces intelligently to perform it must have ever been apparent. It remained for the World War, conceived, at least in the American mind in unselfish motive, to create and give flesh and blood expression to so Divine a vocation; and assign it honored rank among National institutions eminently to be desired, and, without invidious comparison, devotedly to be maintained.

One day, timing and dodging dropping shells, I came to ruined, bombarded Essey. A single piece of bread had been my only fare for many trying hours and I was hungry to the point of exhaustion.

Above the door of a dugout I saw the welcome sign "Salvation Army," and, making my way to the door, I knocked. It was at once opened by two lady secretaries.

The savory odor of fresh, crisp fried cakes greeted me, and in the center of the room beyond, I saw a table heaped high with the precious viands themselves! Truly it was Angel

Food! Not the lily-white sort served and known as such at home, but the golden ambrosial kind angels dream of—and surely were the Salvation Army ladies who saved me that day from starving, angels. Not only did they kindly point to the table of delight and generously say, “Help yourself, Chaplain,” but Adjutant Brown, husband of one of them, entering at that moment, cheerily remarked:

“Chaplain, won’t you join us? we are just sitting down to dinner.”

Having no other dinner engagement just then, I accepted! The table was placed under a stairway, just room for the four of us. Outside, the air was filled with the spume and shriek of bursting shells. The windows were tightly barricaded, and a candle, placed in the mouth of a bottle, gave the only light.

“Chaplain, will you offer Grace?”

Reverently all four bowed our heads in prayer; and may the good God who brought us there together, join us some future day in his heavenly home above!

The problem of transportation was most insistent and difficult. The Division being far below

its quota of automobiles and motorcycles, Chaplains and burying details were compelled frequently to journey on foot, with possible aid from some passing truck.

Under these conditions I found "Jip" truly "bonne chance." "Jip" was the horse assigned me by my good friend, Lieutenant Davis, of Headquarters Troop, and whom I named after my faithful dog "Jip" of Harvey. He was a noble animal, utterly without fear; broken by chasseurs-a-cheval to gun fire. My only comrade on many a long, lone ride, we grew fond of each other to a degree only he can appreciate who has spent days and weeks of solitude and danger with a devoted horse. All the pet names and phrases "Jip" of Harvey knew, I lavished on him, leaning forward to whisper in his ear. Although it was not the familiar French he heard, it seemed to please him, and obediently he bore me on, little heeding the danger of the trail, so that he shared my sorrows and pleasures.

One beautiful day in mid-October, he carried me many miles through Bois de Puvinelle, deep in whose solitudes, at Jung Fontaine the 20th Machine Gun Battalion was camped; passing on

our way ruined Martincourt, then heavily shelled, to the borders of grim Bois-le-Pretre.

Before starting on this mission, which had for its object inspecting of front line conditions and burial work, I had talked over the situation thoroughly with Colonel P. Lenoncle, French Army, who, during two years, had fought over every foot of Bois-le-Pretre, and won there his Croix de Guerre.

"Monsieur le Chaplain," he said, "this forest is a household word for danger and death throughout all Germany. I know, in your goodness, you will not fail to bury any of my brave *poilu* whose bodies you there may find."

Glorious was our canter down the dim leafy aisles of the Bois oak, maple, ash, and pine flamed with the glorious coloring of autumn. Crimson ivy festooned each swaying limb, weaving canopies against a mottled sky of blue and white; morning-glories nodded greeting from the hedges, while forest floors were carpeted with the red of geranium, yellow of marigold and purple of aster.

Through the winding tunnel of foliage "Jip" was keenly alert. He seemed, with his good





THIACOURT UNDER SHELL-FIRE.



horse sense, to feel that he was carrying a very well-meaning but inexperienced Chaplain, more interested perhaps in things botanical and floral than military. When I, for example, showed inclination to dismount and inspect a beautiful saddle lying by the roadside, it was evidently a German officer's, "Jip," with ears back, snorted and galloped furiously past. A veteran sergeant afterwards quietly remarked:

"'Jip' likely saved you that time, Chaplain, from a 'planted' bomb, for which that saddle was the bait."

Evening found us at the near approaches of Saint Marie farm. As the area from this point forward was drenched with gas, and therefore no place for "Jip," who stubbornly refused to wear his mask, I decided to leave him and continue forward on foot. Making my way to a dugout, then Company Headquarters of the gallant 19th Machine Gunners, I happened upon a young gunner named Costigan.

"Will you look after 'Jip' for me, Buddie?"

"I will be glad to, Father," he replied. "Your sister used to be my teacher in the Ogden school, Chicago!"

How small the world was! To find that Boisle-Pretre was just around the corner from Chestnut and North State Street!

Grim and terrible, however, was the work just ahead. Entering that forest was like going into some vast fatal Iroquois Theatre saturated with death-dealing gas. It was even then being swept by a tornado of screaming, bursting shells, scattering far and wide fumes of mustard and chlorine, a single inhalation of which meant unspeakable agony and death. But our brave boys were there with souls to be prepared, and poor mangled bodies were there, reverently to be buried!

It was supreme test for the gas mask! That frail piece of rubber alone stood between us and death. The slightest rent or leakage would be fatal, as injury to the suit of the deep sea diver. These masks had been issued in sizes 3, 4 and 5. Some fitted better than others; others bound painfully about the temples. We had been trained to adjust them quickly from "alert" to the face in seven seconds, and woe to him who breathed before the clasp was on his nose, the tube in his mouth, or the chin piece properly

in place. Under ordinary conditions, they were supposed to filter the poisonous air for thirty-six hours. It was extraordinary conditions, however, rising either from faulty adjustment, rubber strain, or mechanical injury that usually proved their undoing.

On that October day I had remained in the gas waves but four hours and felt I had escaped without injury. Such, however, proved not my good fortune. My mask had evidently not functioned properly and that night of torture to body, head and eyes was accounted for in the simple words of the kind Doctor Lugar:

"Chaplain, you are gassed."

A few days' nursing and care at the Field Hospital restored strength and vigor needed for a new and even more interesting encounter.

On the afternoon of Sunday, October 25th, I had held services at three o'clock in a dugout at Vieville-en-Haye. Carefully hidden in a forest immediately south of this village were then located three of our large guns. The boys had proudly named them, "President's Answer," "Theda Bara" and "Miss McCarthy." They were throwing high explosive shells along the

Metz highway. The enemy was frantically replying with eight-inch Howitzers from points some six kilometers north, dropping shells at two-minute intervals into Vieville-en-Haye and its environs.

As there was much gas along this front, I had left "Jip" at home and was using a Harley-Davidson cycle side-car Lieutenant Trainor of Headquarters had kindly loaned me—further giving me daring Corporal Plummer of Aurora, one of the most skillful of his chauffeurs.

Following the services our next work was a trip to Vilcey-sur-Trey, some four kilometers away, at the eastern approach of Death Valley. Emerging from the dugout our plans were quickly outlined. Taking advantage of the regular two-minute intervals between falling shells, we planned to first let one come over, then make a quick dash up the front street and get out into the shelter of Death Valley before the next one fell.

Rev. Mr. Muggins, Y. M. C. A. secretary, a very estimable and highly respected man, shook his head.

"Chaplain, you can hardly make it."

"How about it, Corporal?" I said to Plummer.

"Sure, we can make it," he replied.

"Let's go," I said, and quickly slid into the side car.

We let a shell come over, saw where it burst, then dashed up the street. Skillfully avoiding heaps of brick and mortar scattered along the way, quicker than it takes to tell, we traversed two blocks and reached a point just opposite the ruined church. Here we rushed full into an ugly crater, our machine fouled and our way was blocked!

We knew a German gun across those fields was even then trained on this spot and would pay its respects in about one minute. Plummer tried to kick and shake life into the machine; I did the praying. Just before lay ruins of the old church. I thought of the countless times Holy Mass had been offered there, and humbly I asked God to spare me and my boy, to turn aside from us the stroke of death—but,

"Not my will but Thine be done."

"Boom!" Across the fields came the sickening report! Ordering Plummer to throw himself



to the ground, I was in the act of alighting, and was partly free of the machine, when the shell burst, about one hundred feet away. My right arm seemed to burn; but I was alive, and flat on the ground. Breathlessly we waited, like a boxer in his corner, until the next shell came over. This struck about a block away. At once we sprang to our feet and rushed into the shelter of Death Valley. Plummer was unhurt; but I was slightly bleeding from right arm and left leg. They were but scratches; and most humbly I thanked God for sparing us.

"Well, Chaplain, they winged you this time," said good Captain Cash, Abilene, Texas, Medical Corps, when I reported. My right forearm was broken, but nothing serious enough to make me an ambulance case.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE GREATER LOVE

I never recall those really worth while times without being reminded of a certain Lieutenant whose name I do not feel at present free to reveal. The attending circumstances were so deeply pathetic, and his confidence in me of a nature so sacred, I will but narrate the details without divulging his identity.

Handsome, generous, brave, highly competent in military art, he was as skillful in getting action from his giant gun as he was masterful in evoking music from his violin! If there was anything his platoon boys admired more, even than himself, it was the music of his ever generous, ever delighting violin. Deep in some dugout we would gather around him. Tenderly and fondly he would take the instrument from the battered box, patting it like a young mother her baby's cheek.

Beginning with some light popular air in which all would vocally join, he would soon

glide like a spirit of melody to the unprofaned height of the music masters. Bach was his favorite. And when, with the mute, to soften the waves from unfriendly ears, he would interpret some symphony of the soul, we would forget our grim surroundings and dream we "dwelt in marble halls."

He knew my passionate fondness for music and took delight in pleasing me. What pictures he could paint on the canvas of my fancy! Under the spell of his music I would drop anchor in the harbor of the fairest dream. Now, it would be a landscape the brush of his bow would paint—a midsummer day with sheep gently grazing on some hillside: again, it would be a forest, with treetops cowering before an on-rushing storm.

One evening he was playing with the mute on "Humoresque." His big brown eyes, that were not the least attractive feature of his handsome face, looked steadily into mine across the bridge of his violin.

"What is the picture tonight, Chaplain?"

"I see a coast," I replied; "it is a fair summer day, with waves of all blue and silver, dancing in the breeze. A yacht is just off shore; the sail, a



DOCTOR LUGAR AND AIDS WORKING IN A GAS ATTACK NEAR JOLNEY.



creamy bit of color; at the tiller a chap, handsome as yourself, and at his side a girl"—here he stopped playing and looking intently at me exclaimed:

"Why, that's the very thing I was thinking of myself!"

Laying aside the violin he drew from his kit a bundle of letters tied with ribbon. Delightedly, radiantly, he showed me *her* picture—yes, her pictures, for surely he had twenty of them. Then he narrated "the sweetest story ever told"; how wonderful she was, how tenderly he loved her, how they had sacredly promised to marry on his return, and planned to seek their young fortunes in South America.

The days following were filled with big thrilling events. The ebb and flow of battle called into action all that was best and noblest in the boys, and my Lieutenant served his Battery and wrought deeds of valor to a degree all excelling and inspiring. I knew the secret of it all, it was the thought of her, his promised wife, and of the bliss awaiting a gallant soldier's return.

It was just one week later the letter came. Few received mail that day; he was one who did. My

attention was first called to him by the sound of a moan that seemed to come from a heart utterly broken. He stood leaning against a caisson staring at the letter, his face deathly white. Instinctively I realized it all. It was from her, and its message was as some stroke of lightning from a cloudless sky. Mutely he came to me, pressed the letter in my hand, and turned away.

A glance through its lines told me the worst; that while she admired his courage and unselfishness more than any man in the world, and always would, still, as she did not, could never, love him as she felt a wife should love her husband, would he now release her and give up their engagement!

Knowing him as I did, noble, unselfish, and devotedly, tenderly loving her with all his soul, most deeply did I pity him. It was the supreme hour and crisis of his life. If there were ever a time when he needed her love to sustain him, when day and night he grappled with death and fought with all his soul, as only the patriot *can* fight, it was now.

It was the beginning of the end. Sub-consciously I sensed impending tragedy, and was de-



pressed beyond expression. Not indeed that he became morose, ugly or unsoldierly. On the contrary, never was he more attentive to Battery duties or considerate toward his men. Bravely would he laugh and jest and try to appear happy; but I knew it was all merely heroic endeavor, and that his heart was utterly broken. If he gave expression to his loss at all it was through his violin. It was all in a minor strain, and its notes were of the soul of one

“Who treads alone,

Some banquet hall deserted:

Whose lights are fled, and garlands dead,

• • • All, all save he departed.”

It was the afternoon of ten days later. In an orchard on a hillside his Battery had just come into position. By some alert enemy-observing plane the movement had evidently been noted, for it was not seven minutes later that a high explosive shell came screaming over the hill, directly hitting his gun, instantly killing gunner No. 1, and mortally wounding himself.

Ten minutes later I reached his side. He was still conscious, had received First Aid, but was

sinking rapidly. "I am not afraid to die, Chaplain. It's my turn I guess. There is a letter here in my blouse pocket. I wrote it to her the other night. Read it, will you please, and if it is all right, post it for me when I am gone."

Blinded with my tears I carefully took the letter from his pocket. It was wet with his heart's blood. I do not now recall its every word, but in substance, it released her. "My Duchess" was the endearing title at the top of the page. It declared his deep, abiding love for her: a love so unselfish and complete as not wanting to ever, either directly or indirectly, mar her happiness. In life and death her memory would continue to be the one supreme inspiration of his life. As she requested, he had burned the letters, retaining but one, stained with a rose she had once given him.

"Oh my boy! I am proud of you," I cried, when I finished reading. "If it is all right, Chaplain, please post it when I am gone."

The deathly pallor of his face warned me the end was near. Though not directly of my faith, he had often remarked his preference for my ministrations; and with all my soul I helped

him make Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and perfect Contrition. Gently his eyes closed, his head fell forward on my breast, and his brave sweet spirit passed to its Maker.

Kneeling around, with tears seaming their ashen battle-stained faces, were his boys. Tenderly they helped me carry his poor torn body to the shelter of a neighboring ravine. On the hillside we buried him, marking his grave with the Sign of Him who shall remember the Brave, the Pure, the Good.

I posted the letter, as he requested, enclosing it all, as it was blood-stained, in another envelope. I have forgiven, as he would have me do, the inconsiderate action of the girl who brought such sorrow to the supreme hour of his sacrifice. Some day, when the wounds of cruel war are healed, I may forget. And yet, reviewing it all in the light of the supernatural and the greater reward awaiting him beyond the stars, may we not believe that an all-wise, ever-merciful Father permitted this crowning sorrow of his young life that it might be but opportunity, humbly and prayerfully endured, of a soul-cleansing nature, and add luster to his reward of the Greater Love through eternal years!

## CHAPTER VIII

### THIACOURT—AERIAL DARING

"Where are you saying Mass next Sunday Chaplain?"

"In Thiacourt," I replied.

Just the shadow of a doubt flitted across the handsome face of Colonel Cummings, who nevertheless promptly responded, "All right, I'll be there."

That Mass *could* safely be said in such a veritable inferno as Thiacourt November 1st offered very reasonable room for doubt. Located but a single kilometer from the front line trench, its ruins were shelled by day, and air bombed by night, with daring Fokers and Taubes finding rare sport in spraying its main street with machine gun fire.

The gallant boys of the 55th Infantry, nine hundred of whom came from Chicago, were then bravely holding that death-swept point; and I was determined to bring them the consolation

and strength of Religion in their supreme need.

Dawn was breaking that Sunday morning when I rode through Bouillonville. Leading north from this village the road leaves the shelter of a friendly hill and plunges boldly across the open plain. Our Batteries were firing constantly from every available angle of the hills, and the enemy's spirited reply made very heavy the din of gun fire. In all directions, on roadside, field and hill, geysers were rising, and yawning yellow craters forming from the impact of bursting shells.

It was seldom I urged "Jip" out of a canter. This morning, however, things were different. The road through the open plain lay full in view and range of eagle-eyed enemy snipers.

Across the pommel of the saddle, in front, was fastened a bag of oats; and behind, my Mass kit. Tightly I strapped on my steel helmet, with gas mask tied at "alert."

Leaving the shelter of the hill I leaned forward and spoke to "Jip." "Allez! Allez! Mon petit cheval!" Right bravely he responded. With ears back, and raven mane and tail streaming to the breeze, he fairly hurled himself forward

across the death-swept plain. His speed and courage stood between me and eternity.

It is not easy for even the best sniper to hit such a fast moving horse. At a point two hundred yards to the right of us burst a huge shell. To just the slightest degree "Jip" trembled, but with never a break of his even flying stride. "Thank God!" was my heartfelt prayer as we reached the ruined mill at Thiacourt.

Quickly dismounting I led "Jip" deep into the rear of a building whose front was shot away.

O how I hugged and patted that brave little horse; and from the manner he pawed the ground and rubbed his nose against my side I felt he fairly thrilled with the pride of his race with death. For your sake, my brave little "Jip," I will never be unkind to a horse as long as I live.

Rewarding him with an extra ration of oats, and leaving him secure from gas, I proceeded forward on foot.

Shrapnel was bursting all about, and its sharp, sizzling echo, against walls still standing, made maddening din.

Dodging from building to building up the deserted front street I reached a point opposite the

Hotel de Ville in time to see the front of a building one hundred yards to the left blown completely out by a bursting shell. The church was but a heap of smoking ruins.

In the courtyard of a large building, that a few days before was headquarters of the German staff, I was welcomed by boys of the 55th Infantry. It was a platoon in command of Lieutenant Coughlan of Mobile, Alabama.

This gallant young man, nephew of Capt. Coughlan who sailed with Dewey into Manila Bay, was every inch a hero. Just the day before he had held a front sector against terrible odds when the platoon on his right had fallen back under heavy gas attack with its commander mortally wounded. In this encounter Coughlan was badly gassed himself, and could not speak above a whisper. "I know the Latin, and can serve your Mass all right, Chaplain, if you can stand for my whispers."

An altar was improvised out of a richly carved sideboard standing in the courtyard. After a goodly number had gone to Confession, a crowd of some two hundred assembled for the Mass. At this moment Colonel Cummings, true



to his word that he would be on hand, strode into the yard.

The boys knelt around, wearing their steel helmets, and with masks at "alert." My vestments consisted simply of a stole worn over my cassock. Helmet and mask lay easily within reach at one side. The firing, meanwhile, was terrific—high explosive shells shrieking overhead and bursting on every side. Rifle and machine-gun bullets added their shrill tenor notes to the orchestral wail of gun fire.

I had prepared a sermon, but, amid such din, I, for a moment, questioned the possibility and even propriety of delivering it. I decided in the affirmative, and raised my voice in challenge to the wild clamor of death.

As I looked upon the battle-stained faces before me, I felt how pleasing it all must have been in the sight of Him who feared not Death of old, and who said on the hills of Galilee: "Greater love than this no man has, that he give up his life for his friends."

Mass over, the boys quickly disappeared into neighboring dugouts. Colonel Cummings was greatly pleased with it all, remarking, "As soon

as you began Mass, Chaplain, the gun fire seemed to ease a bit, and a comparative zone of quiet prevailed where we were gathered."

"I shall know after this, Colonel," I laughingly replied, "what is bringing you to Mass—to get into a zone of quiet!" Permit me to add here, however that the good Colonel needed no urging to attend Mass. I never met a better Christian overseas nor a more gallant loyal comrade than Colonel Cummings.

The remaining hours of that day were spent in ministering to the living and burying the dead. Along that battle swept front the Chaplain was always gladly welcomed and his divine Message reverently received. Death in its thousand ghastly forms, ever impending, ever threatening, impressed with serious religious thought the consciousness of even the most careless. In direct proportion to the coming and going of danger was the ebb and flow of the tide spiritual. "Haven't you noticed, Chaplain, an improvement in my language of late? I sure have been trying to cut out swearing." Often would some officer or enlisted man—of any or no church membership—so remark, and who had hitherto been prone to sins of the tongue.

On such occasions two thoughts would come to me—the reflection of Tertullian that “The soul of man is by nature religious;” and the admonition of Ecclesiastes 7:40, “Remember thy last end and thou shalt never sin.” Far into that All Saints night I heard Confessions, and was edified with the large number who approached Holy Communion All Souls morning.

In burial work, we always made it a point, where it was at all possible, to bury the enemy dead as reverently as our own. We would gather their poor shell-torn bodies, often in advanced stages of decomposition, and place them in graves on sheltered hillsides, safe from gun fire, carefully assembling in Musette bags their belongings, which we would forward to the Prisoner of War Department. One day, while so assembling the scattered remains of four dead Germans, evidently killed by the same shell, one of our boys of the 34th Infantry, Sam Volkel by name, who before the war lived in my old parish at Harvey, passed by. This good boy’s parents had been born in Germany. When he saw the reverent care we were giving those four of the enemy dead, he came up to me and with tears

streaming down his smoke and dust-covered face exclaimed, "Father, God bless you."

"De mortuis nil nisi bonum" is a principle of conduct dating back to Him who of old declared burial of the dead a corporal work of mercy. It is the mark, neither of the Christian individual nor nation, to disrespect a body nor desecrate its resting place. The fact that in life it was tenanted by the soul of an enemy is no justification for dishonoring it; for He who is Infinite Truth and Justice declares "Love thy enemy; do good to those who hate you, and bless those who persecute you." This, of course, is not the way of the world; but *is* the way of Him whose standards of living must guide our lives, and whose will to reward or punish us shall prevail through Eternity.

We had now been many weeks at the extreme front on minimum ration of all things bearing on bodily comfort or mental relaxation. Water was but a word, a memory, cherished dream of him who wrote "The Old Oaken Bucket." If we could but find enough of the chlorinated drug store kind to nourish our canteen, we were prepared to dispense with the common, or laundry serving, variety.

In the eternal fitness of things, there came now into being an Army institution, officially known as the Delousing Station. It appears to have been named in memory of a certain small wingless insect. There was an appeal to it that at once caught the popular fancy of the soldiers, always itching for novelty, and it became the most frequented of watering places. It was a thoroughly democratic affair, officers and enlisted men freely approving and patronizing it, under the undenying impulse, no doubt, of a common human need. It little mattered that its location was usually the wreckage of some wind-swept barn; or that its furniture consisted of a barrel of water jauntily poised on the rafters; the spectacle of Buddie, bar of soap in hand, sporting and splashing in the limpid stream of that miniature Niagara, offered wealth of theme for the inspired artist, poet, and writer of commercial advertising.

I greatly wonder that the hallowed memory of this loving institution has so far escaped the popular fancy as to be left "unwept, unhonored and unsung." That it *was* inspirational might be shown from the case of a boy of the 64th Infan-

try changing the words of the popular song, "They go wild, simply wild, over me," to "They *run* wild, simply wild, over me."

Huts designed to offer any manner of mental relaxation, reading, music, and the like, were necessarily many miles to the rear. No sound but gun fire was ever to be heard. No matin bugle call of Reveille to rouse, nor plaintive note of Taps to "mend the ravelled sleeve of care." No regimental band to "soothe the savage breast," nor lead to the charge in the way it is described in books of history.

No lights to show from dugout or trench, not even on motor cars or cycles dashing along treacherous roads and trails. If mess and water carts could be kept in touch with advanced posts, the mail and welfare supply trucks could be dispensed with.

Days and weeks would pass without so much as sight of a letter, newspaper, book, or word from the rear of any kind. Such times were like living in the bottom of a well, glimpses of the sky overhead, but all around you, dark, foul, and deathly.

Amid such surroundings our chief pleasure



and relaxation was often the sky. Reclining in the soft yielding mud we could watch the canvas of the heavens, stretched from horizon to horizon, in panoramic splendor. Whether it was the hour of the "powerful king of day rejoicing in the east," the mid-day brooding calm, or when "Night folds her starry curtains round," the ever-changing, ever-beautiful pictures of cloudland lulled to rest our fancies sweet as music which

"Gentler on the spirit lies  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes."

How thrilled we were when cloudland became of a sudden peopled with armed men! When that azure blue became an ocean, with ships of the air scudding in and out of cloudy coves, around billowy headlands, "zuming," spiraling, volplaning, maneuvering for position to hurl broadsides of death.

It was all, as it were, a tournament staged for our amusement. Herald of its beginning would be a splash of white against the blue above the German lines. Faintly, then with steadily increased volume in tone, would come to our ears





THE WOUNDED WERE CARRIED TO THE NEAREST SHELTER.



the unmistakable high tenor engine trum of a Foker plane.

All eyes would intently watch its approach. It was coming over to deal death or destruction of some sort, possibly to attack our anchored observing balloon, just to the rear.

Seconds as well as minutes count in such an adventure, and quicker than the eye can count them, puffy balls of white appear above, below and all around on the on-rushing Foker; they are the shrapnel bursts of our vigilant anti-aircraft guns that have now opened briskly from every hill and forest.

On it comes!—and now black puffs appear in its path, the dynamite shells of our guns finding their range. Boom! boom! rat-ta-tat-boom-rat-ta-tat is the music that greets our ears and every hill is a tremble under the shock of thousands of rounds of fire.

In such an emergency our orders are clear. We must remain perfectly motionless: we will not be seen unless we move about. We must not fire at him; he must know neither our location nor what arms we have.

The tons of steel being hurled into the air must

meanwhile fall in splinters to the earth. Here is where our steel helmets prove so serviceable, protecting the head not only from falling splinters, but from bullets of the machine gun the Foker flyer is now vigorously firing earthward.

Now a new and welcome sound greets our eyes. Coming on the wings of the wind out of the south is the strong deep bass of Liberty Motor music—the all-American made—which, though arriving in quantity late in the war, proved at once its superiority to all others. Our ground guns have driven the Foker high into the air; which, evidently noting that the on-coming ships are merely observing and not fighting planes, comes steadily on!

How vividly I recall that stirring afternoon! We were on a hillside, just above Thiaccourt, directing the work of a burial detail. As the Foker reached a point directly over us he dove full in our direction. There was nothing for us to do, no shelter to take refuge in, just an unprotected slope of the hill.

Whether it was the fact that we were a burial party and he wished to spare us—and this explanation I like to believe—or whether, by fir-

ing on us, he might betray his presence, and thus defeat his main purpose, which was to destroy the balloon anchored in the neighboring valley, I will never know; but *this* I *do* know—at a point directly above us, and where he could most easily have killed us with machine gun fire, he suddenly changed his course.

Gliding down the valley, he raced full upon the observing balloon and hurled incendiary shells into it, setting it on fire; then, coming about, he dashed away to the north, escaping over his own lines amid a shower of leaden hail! "Ill blows the wind that profits no one"—the position of undertaker, we at first hesitated in accepting, had saved our life; burial boys were, after this, more reconciled than ever to their work!

Air craft battles, although of frequent occurrence along our front, were always watched with keen delight. Our fliers were chiefly of the 108th Squadron from the fields of Toul and Colombey-le-Belles.

It was in our area, on the banks of the Moselle, that the heroic and gallant Lufberry fell, fighting, to his death. He is buried in the little ceme-

tery of Evacuation Hospital No. 1, near Toul.

Eddie Rickenbacker, Reed Landis, Tuper Weyman, Elmer Crowel, Bernard Granville, Douglas Campbell, these and others were the gallant Aces of our Army, flying and fighting daily over the front.

On September twenty-eighth Douglas Campbell fell in flames at Pannes. In the cemetery of the old church there he is buried. It was with special interest we cared for his grave, inasmuch as his home was in Kenilworth, near our own Chicago.

Infantry contact flying was necessarily hazardous. It meant flying at an elevation easily in reach of rifle fire.

Usually at mess, the evening before, the flyer, chosen for this mission, would be notified. His companions, too, would hear of the selection; and often indulged, in their own grim humorous way, of reminding him of the fact! The man next to him at the table would softly and weirdly hum a strain from Chopin's Funeral March, setting its music to the solemn words, "Ten thousand dollars going home to the States!"

It was this trait in Buddie's character, how-

ever, ability to make the best of things, to see the smooth and not the seamy side of Death's mantle, that made him the most intelligent, cool, and resourceful of all fighting men. His buoyancy of disposition and resiliency of spirit gave him a self-confidence and initiative that made him rise superior to all hardship, and, as it were, compelled circumstances to side with him.

The 10th Field Signal Battalion, commanded by the brilliant and big-hearted Major Gustav Hirsch of Columbus, Ohio, was a favorite rendezvous of mine. The nature of work of these Signal men appealed to me; and their nomadic habits co-ordinated happily with my duties, frequently requiring me, along the changing front, "to fold my tent with Arabs and silently steal away."

They had direct charge of the Intelligence Maintenance of War work, and constituted the axes of liaison between the various Units of the Division.

Their skill in the transmission of messages was most remarkable. Masking their operations in the language of secret signs and ciphers, they made use of the telephone, telegraph, radio, wig-



wag, panel, carrier pigeon, blinker, and last, and perhaps most dependable of all, the living runner. The duty of the latter consisted in carrying messages to or from exposed positions when no other means would do. Usually a volunteer from any branch, he was selected because of courage, agility and ability to get through somehow, no matter how great the opposing odds. I was present in an Observation Post near Jolney talking to Colonel Lewis, when a runner came rushing across No Man's Land through a leaden hail, saluted, handed a message to Captain Payne, and fell unconscious at his feet. There were no greater heroes of the war.

Operators and linesmen "carried on" under conditions demanding the greatest courage—remaining to the last in exposed positions like the wireless heroes of a sinking ship. I have known lines to be shelled and blown to pieces a dozen times during the day, and just as often repaired by daring linesmen.

Frequently sharing their mess and dugouts, I cultivated the friendship, not only of their generous Commander, but of Captain Cash, of Abilene, Texas; Captain Jim Williams, of Troy,

Alabama; and Lieutenant Phillips of Brooklyn, New York—three of the most beloved of soldiers. Lieutenant Andy O'Day, of Detroit, also with them, was heavily gassed at Jolney.

Attached to the Battalion, too, was a brilliant young man, Lieutenant D'Orleans, French Army. He was from Brittany, had won the Croix de Guerre, and spoke English, if not fluently, at least interestingly.

## CHAPTER IX

### REMBERCOURT

On Saturday night, November ninth, I had repaired to my dugout near Boullionville, planning to say two Masses at distant points the following morning. I retired early to snatch a little rest.

At midnight, Lieutenant D'Orleans rushed into the dugout and roused me, hoarsely whispering,—“Chaplain, a big movement is on!”

Rolling from my blanket I hurried outside. The night was intensely dark; but there, in the valley before me, I could make out a long column of troops.

For some days there had been growing signs and vague hints of a big attack impending. Was this its beginning?

Reporting at once to the head of the column, I found Colonel Lewis and Major Black. The troops were the 2nd Battalion of the 64th Infantry. The Colonel, a trimly built little man, and every inch a fighter, was eating a bar of choco-



ST. JOAN OF ARC.



late. "Here, Chaplain, have a bar of chocolate; I have an extra one. By the way we are going to attack at dawn."

The personification of coolness, how proud I was of him! He was ready; he knew his troops were ready; he was about to lead them to the heights of grim Rembercourt, one of the most prized and fought for positions along our front!

These brave boys of the Second Battalion, going, many of them, to their death, needed us. Good Chaplain LeMay of the Battalion would need assistance; moreover the 55th Infantry would be in that attack, and they, at that time, had no Catholic Chaplain. Many needed Sacramental Confession; all needed God's blessing. At once, I decided to cancel the two Masses I had planned, and accompany them.

In column of squads the troops moved down the valley. As we were but eight hundred marching against a strongly held hill, every approach to which fairly bristled with machine gun nests, success depended primarily on the element of surprise. We were prepared to pay something for that hill, but if we could rush it, the cost would be minimum.

The alert enemy had thrust forward tentacles of listening posts deep into our neighborhood, and, if a chance star shell revealed us, he would lay down a deadly barrage.

We were favored indeed by a blanket of chill fog, that hung over the valley, but our going in the slimy, sticky clay was labored and slow.

Dawn found us in the shelter of a hill near the old mill north of Jolney. This old stone building overhung the river, and stood at the eastern end of the bridge. Later that day it was occupied by General Wahl, commanding the 13th Brigade, and used as his Headquarters. At this point the column was halted; and Colonel Lewis, Major Black, I, and two privates walked forward about five hundred yards around the foot of the hill to reconnoitre. The railroad leading to Metz paralleled this valley; and, but a few yards ahead, half a dozen box cars, hit by our shells, were burning.

The river at this point is about one hundred yards wide and at no place over five feet deep. It is spanned by a stone bridge sharply arched, built for heavy strain.



Our objective lay on the opposite shore, a hill, some three hundred feet high, covered with scrub oak and cedar. This hill, which commanded the village of Rembercourt and the entire valley, had been firmly held and desperately defended by the enemy even against Pershing's September attack. Ours was now the coveted honor of wresting it from his grasp, once and for all.

Two courses lay open to our crossing, one, to use the bridge, the other to wade the river. The Colonel discouraged the use of the bridge, as the fog was even then thinning out, and, if the column were discovered, in silhouette, artillery would speedily destroy it. He therefore directed Major Black to have his troops wade the river, keeping on the sheltered side of the bridge.

Holding their guns clear of the water the men waded across in silence, keeping single file. The first man to step into that icy water was the gallant little Colonel, his blue French gas mask at "alert," his "forty-five" and precious bars of chocolate held safely above the water. I was directly behind him. A long column marching in single file through a muddy stream soon cuts

a deep channel; and the last two hundred men to cross made wet work of the wading.

That our thoughts were at least partially human at that time, I now recall the following form of reasoning expressed by a Buddie near by. "I am going to get pneumonia out of this wetting; but, most likely, I'll be killed anyway in this hill attack, so I should worry!"

Just at the river edge, a boy suddenly dropped his rifle and began to alternately wildly laugh and cry. A sergeant quickly placed his hand over his mouth to silence him lest his calls might reveal our presence to the enemy. Gently leading him to one side he left him for the First Aid detail. His poor mind had given out under the terrible strain; shell shock, it was called. No comment was made by the men marching past; they pitied him, knowing it was not that he was a coward or a quitter, but simply that he had gone insane under the deadly reality of it all. Why more did not go mad in that Valley of Death only God can explain!

Emerging on the far shore, we picked our heavy way across the stretch of swamp, that led toward the base of our objective. Although the enemy

was not aware of our presence in force, he was keeping up a desultory shelling of his hill base as a matter of ordinary precaution. Like the flare of June bugs along the roadside in summer, high explosive shells would burst every few minutes, here, there, and in most unexpected places. Colonel Lewis ordered that the men be kept in as open formation as possible, so that fewer would be hit at a time, and falling shells be reduced to minimum zones of destruction.

Here we had just assembled and were forming for the attack when the sheltering fog suddenly lifted. It was now eight o'clock. We had not yet ~~been~~ discovered. The men were ordered to lie in their tracks and await orders.

From the spiritual point of view this delay was opportune; as it offered opportunity of passing down the line, to hear confessions and extend to all the boys divine aid.

Surely that halt was a God-send! The prayer of many a mother, far overseas, had moved the Good Master to give her soldier boy this last chance to pause for a prayer on the threshold of death!

This was pre-eminently the Chaplain's hour!

Above all others were his every ministration and word and glance prized and respected.

There were no infidels, no religious scoffers, among those soldiers seriously awaiting the zero hour. In the rear areas and rest billets, the profane and irreligious word might often have been heard; but face to face with Death, Judgment, Heaven or Hell, the skeptic was silenced. Boys who might have been hitherto negligent in approaching the Sacraments were now the first to call to me, "Father, I want to go to Confession."

In a time so uncertain, momentarily awaiting orders "Over the Top," to hear each one individually was physically impossible. For just this emergency, the far-seeing, merciful Church of the All Merciful God has provided a means.

It is the General Absolution, so beautifully administered by Chaplain McDonald of the Leviathan, and which our Faculties provided. When a person in such emergency could not actually confess, he made an act of Perfect Contrition, being sorry for his sins because by them he had offended the Good God, and with the intention of going to Confession as soon as he could. While confession was always desirable, sorrow was ever, indispensable.

In our case the priest was morally and physically present and he gave Sacramental Absolution to all, using the plural, "Ego vos absolvo a peccatis vestris."

Whether on the battlefield or in hospital wards filled with men dying of disease or wounds, the priest has a divine message to deliver and a sacramental duty to perform from which no manner or danger of death can deter him. "Is any man sick amongst you," says St. James in the 24th Chapter of his Epistle (Douay or King James version) "let him call in the priests of the Church, and they shall anoint him with oil in the Name of the Lord." It was in the fulfillment of this Divinely imposed duty that 1600 priests of America voluntarily turned aside from their parochial work, and, reconsecrating their hearts to the Greater Love, entered the National service as Chaplains during the war.

Seriously the boys studied the hill. On its rugged side was about to be staged a tragedy in which every soldier knew he was to take part. The training of months past was but rehearsal. The leaving home, the oath of military service,

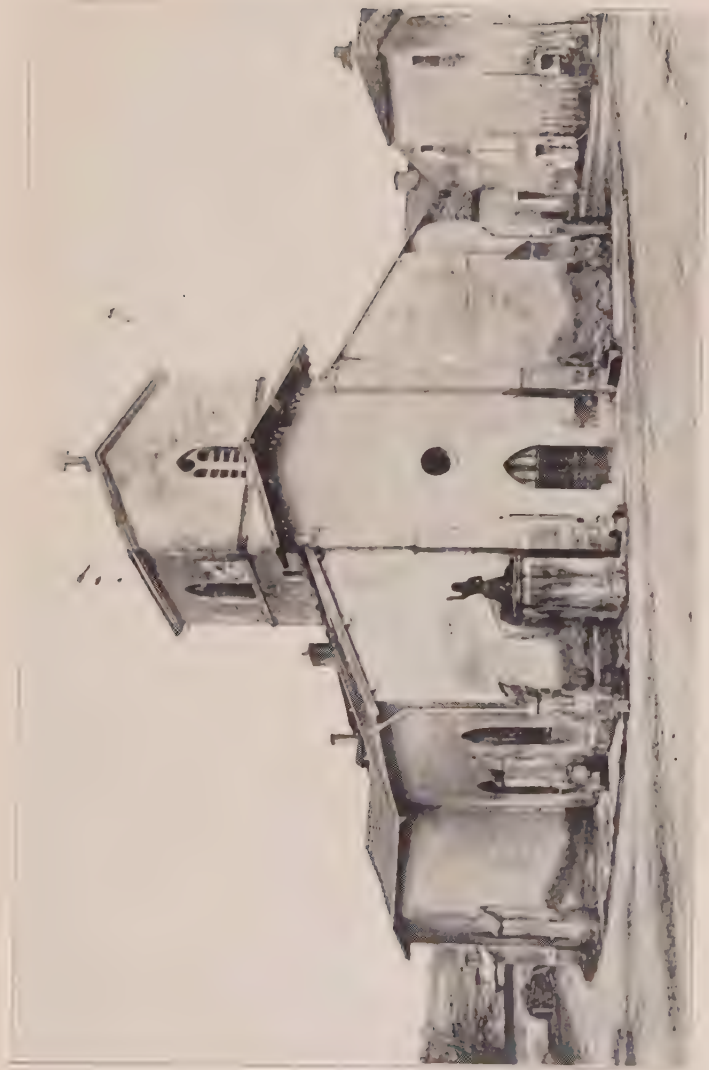
the weary grind of march, and weapon drill, the rigid discipline, all these were but evolving phases, making for the formation of the seasoned soldier. And now they had reached the high altar of National service on which they were prepared to sacrifice their young lives.

"*Morituri salutemus!*" Look closely into the faces of those heroic boys: approach with reverence the sanctuary of their thoughts.

In long, regular lines they lie, immediately at the base of the hill. Most are still and motionless, helmeted, and with bayoneted rifles, like figures some Bartholdi or Rodin might have chiseled from bronze. Some, with free hand, are molding from the yellow, slimy clay, quaint little images, suggested, possibly, by thought of the little tin soldiers of boyhood days. Some, lying prone, are dreamily observing the blue sky showing here and there through billowy clouds. Some have made of their helmet a pillow and appear to sleep. Some with jest and story are radiating a subdued merriment. Some, with eyes staring straight ahead, seem as in a trance

In that tragic hour I looked with their eyes and saw with the vision of their soul. The pic-





WHERE ST. JOAN OF ARC MADE HER FIRST COMMUNION.





ture we all in common saw was painted on the canvas of memory.

It represented any American town; preferably one bowered with maple and elm, and cast in a setting of emerald landscape. Just back from the winding road, a cottage, trellised with moss roses and forget-me-nots. Framed in the doorway, a sweet-faced mother, silver threads amid her gold of hair, is looking across distant fields. A path leads over the hill, and it would seem she watched and waited for someone!

Last night she knelt beside a vacant chair, and, in the lonely vigil of her tears, prayed that God would bless and spare her boy. In the window hangs a service flag. Tomorrow, My God! there shall a message come from overseas changing its silver into gold!

Who is it can smile with heart breaking the  
while

When the soldier bids loved ones "Fare-  
well"?

Whose heart is it grieves, when the patriot  
leaves,

With an anguish that no tongue can tell?

It's only the mother! For man knows no  
other

Whose soul feels the weight of such woe;  
Who can smile and look brave and for  
lonely hours save

The torrent of tears that must flow.

Whose heart is it knows that wherever he  
goes

He'll be true to his country and flag?  
That he'll fight the good fight and die, serv-  
ing the Right

With never a boast or a brag?  
It's the mother whose breast as a babe he  
caressed

And who watched o'er his childhood with  
joy.

Though the years may have flown. and to  
manhood he's grown,

Yet to mother he's always—"My boy"!

Who is it can yearn for the soldier's return,  
When the trumpet of war calls no more:  
When victorious he sees his proud flag kiss  
the breeze

Of his own, his beloved, native shore?

It's the mother whose face like a halo of  
grace

Hovered near him to cheer him afar.

Angels envy her joy as she welcomes her  
boy

Triumphant returned from the war!

Who is it shall kneel at the graveside and  
feel

The full woe of a soldier boy, dead!

Who shall measure such loss, who shall  
carry the cross,

And yet live, when his spirit is fled?

It's the mother who'll wait at Death's  
golden gate,

Where sorrow and parting shall cease!

And she evermore with her boy as of yore,

Shall be crowned in the Kingdom of  
Peace!

One of the brave company commanders in this Battalion was Captain Hall. Coming to me he said, "Chaplain, if I get 'bumped' in this attack, I want you to do me a favor." He then gave me a written message to a certain person in the Division who owed him \$300.00. "Get after

him, will you, Chaplain, and see that the money reaches my folks." "I will be glad to, Captain," I replied. Then, as one good turn deserved another, I wrote out and handed him a little note, which, if he, and not I, came through alive, was to be forwarded to my Chicago home. The Captain was a graduate of West Point, and had seen hard service both on the western plains and in the Cuban war. His hair was gray, and he wore a long gray mustache of which he was proud, and which he was in the habit, when especially thoughtful, of stroking. My hair also was gray, especially since our last gas attack in Bois-le-Pretre.

A Captain from Philadelphia lying in the mud not far from us, noticing our two gray heads close together, mischievously and in a stage whisper remarked, "Old men for counsel, but young men for action!" What Captain Hall, blazing with sudden wrath, thereupon said to him, I think it just as well not to here record! At the time, however, it seemed that he sort of expressed my own feelings on the subject!

Gallant Captain Hall came through alive; but I can see him even now in the very thick of the

fighting that followed a few minutes later. Standing out on the hillside in full view he fought with his steel blue "45" a duel to the death with a German officer who rashly attacked him. For a moment I held my breath, as they deliberately exchanged shot for shot. Then I saw the German fall heavily; and Hall, his right hand twirling his gun, and his left fondly stroking his mustache, coolly surveyed the line looking for another shot.

It was two in the afternoon before the fog began to thicken. The zero hour was at hand!

Although we had marched many weary miles, had lain motionless in the mud for five hours, and had meanwhile tasted neither food nor drink, we did not mind it. One ignores bodily needs under heavy mental stress. I carried a little meat and bread in my pocket, which, that noon, I shared with good Father Le May.

At two-thirty, when the sheltering fog was thickest, quietly the word was passed down the line "Get ready." At that moment I was near the western end of the column near a stone quarry, strongly defended by the enemy with machine guns and automatic rifles.

Promptly the boys made ready, slipping off packs, many even their blouses. It was to be a bayonet rush up that hill, and the idea was to feel as cold and shoulder free as possible. The pain of mustard gas is not so intense if one's body is cool and dry. Officers as well as men were lightly clothed; their only weapons, automatics. I substituted a sweater for my blouse. All felt the tense strain, and throats grew dry and temples throbbed.

At that moment was given a final General Absolution and Blessing.

Sharply, along the crouching line like a flash of fire, boomed the command to advance—"Guns and bayonets now, boys, and give them hell!" Instantly leaping forward, the men hurled themselves up the hill. Helmeted, masked, their bayonets flashing, like the crested foam of some giant wave they swept forward.

We had not advanced fifty feet when over the hillside there burst a hail storm of lead. The enemy hurled into our faces every manner of destruction; bullets and steel fragments screamed through the air, "thudding" into every foot of ground!



The first boy to fall was Riorden of New Jersey, who pitched forward, terribly torn, shortly to my right. Onward and upward swept the line. As I paused a moment beside Riorden to absolve him, Walsh of Syracuse, New York, running some thirty feet in advance, waved his arm for me to hurry. "Holy Joe" was the name given the Chaplain. I never knew its origin, but it was the title most generally used and always with the utmost respect.

Even then could be heard the horrible crash of steel on steel, hand to hand bayonet contact, screams of terror and pain, when the blade dripping blood was withdrawn from its human scabbard. The advance soon reached the hilltop and the gray-clad Germans resisted desperately. The most terrible, horrible, and indescribable of all sights and sounds were now before me. Wild-eyed, panting, fiercely visaged boys in American khaki and German gray, feinting, parrying, and madly lunging with glittering bayonets—the crash and shrill metallic stroke of steel on steel, and Oh! the grunt and scream of agony when the blade sank to its hilt in a blood-spurting human breast! Each boy, in that moment of deadly

shock, was fighting for his own life—it was destroy first or be destroyed, and the first to get in a fatal blow survived. No alien soldier lives however, who can withstand that most terrible and supreme of all fighters—the American Doughboy! Hands were being raised and cries of “Kamerad” heard from every side. The grim heights of Rembercourt were ours; but, my God! see the price we have paid for that eight minutes of struggle.

Boys are down all over the hillside, dead and dying. Tossing, moaning, begging for help, their cries of agony pierce the heart. From the military point of view, indeed, it was called a splendid, clean-cut piece of work. Rembercourt and its approaches in our hands at last, with hundreds of prisoners and spoils of war—all at a loss to us of but nine killed and fifty-two wounded.

Ah! but who shall measure the cost of those nine dead boys to mothers and beloved ones at home! See their lifeless forms lying there amid the wreckage of the hillside. A few minutes ago they knew the thrill of vigorous young manhood; they knew that death might claim them in



IN THE CHURCH AT DOMREMY.



that charge; bravely they went over the top, hoping for the best.

From one to another I hurried with service for all. The dying claimed first care; the dead had to wait; and the chill shadows of night had crept to the hill crest before all the wounded were removed and the last poor body buried.

A terrific cannonade had meanwhile been in progress. Our batteries had opened along the entire front. Tons upon tons of steel were passing on wings of thunder not three hundred feet above our heads. Little heed the boys gave it, so occupied were they with duties near at hand.

Finally, numbed and over-powered to the point of utter exhaustion, I sought an abandoned shack at the foot of the hill. Without removing so much as a single garment, still wet from wading the river, with no taste for food or drink, I threw myself on the floor and fell at once asleep.

It was dawn of the following morning, Monday, November 11, when I awoke. If the cannonading of the evening before was terrible, that morning's bombardment was infinitely more so. It was the first time I had heard a full powered "Drum Head" barrage—where so many batteries and guns are engaged that the sound of firing

and subsequent explosion is continuous and unified in volume. The hills and valleys shook under the rocking recoiling guns as from an earthquake.

Going among the men, I found even the most seasoned of them grimly silent. Their faces, set, as in plaster cast along cadaverous lines, deeply furrowed and caked with dust, perspiration, and powder smoke, made hideous appearance. Never have I seen such wan, frightful expression in human eye. As grim automatons they handled their guns, and moved silently about. Possibly they were too wearied to talk; for to speak, so as to be heard, meant calling at the top of one's voice.

Not far away I met Colonel Cummings. Briefly I narrated the happenings of the day before at our west end of the line. Most warmly he congratulated us and then, in confidence, informed me "Foch has agreed to an Armistice!"

He had just come from Headquarters, which was sending out orders to line and battery commanders to cease firing, that very morning at eleven o'clock.

Silently we gripped hands; but the hearts of both of us thrilled with "Te Deum."

## CHAPTER X

### ARMISTICE DAY—GORZ

Meanwhile our entire front was advancing, following the barrage waves. No more desperate struggle than ours could have been found at any point. Writing of that day, the official A. E. F. newspaper, "Stars and Stripes," under date of November 15th, declared:

#### "Attack Before Vigneulles

"Probably the hardest fighting being done by any Americans in the final hour was that which engaged the troops of the 28th, 92nd, 81st, and 7th Divisions with the Second American Army, who launched a fire-eating attack above Vigneulles just at dawn on the 11th. It was no mild thing, that last flare of the battle, and the order to cease firing did not reach the men in the front line until the last moment, when runners sped with it from fox hole to fox hole."

I hurried along the line deeply pondering the startling report of the good Colonel. We had



been hearing various rumors that the enemy was frantically suing for peace; all these we had set down as but propaganda. If the end were in sight, why this terrific eleventh hour barrage?

The only reason I could imagine was, that its very frightfulness might so deeply impress the resisting troops themselves as to utterly destroy their morale. Once the soldiers themselves realized the weakness of the tottering dynasty behind them, and the overwhelming force of the army in front of them, total failure of their cause must be apparent.

Supreme was my confidence in Foch and Pershing, and I felt that the course they were pursuing would prove, from the military point of view, the best.

At five minutes to eleven I walked a little apart, up the trail, and began saying my Rosary Beads. They were always companion and comfort to my trying hours. Fervently I implored her, who is "Mightier than an army in battle array," to intercede for us to her Divine Son. That, it were pleasing and good in *His* holy sight, this hour of eleven would mark the end.

So occupied was my mind I had not noticed

the falling off in firing. Battery after battery was silencing! Gun after gun growing still.

“Cease firing!” The command sped down the line; and it seemed these two words leaped into the blue vaulted sky above and were echoed in Heaven!

The utter silence that of a sudden came down upon that front was terrifying. More awful in its gripping impressiveness than the most terrific cannonading. You seemed, in that tense moment, to have lost your footing on some storm-swept hill, and fallen headlong into a deep valley. There was no cheering. The boys simply looked at each other and waited; waited like the boxer who, having delivered a fatal blow, stands intently watching his fallen opponent, until the referee has tolled off the final count, and raised his arm in token of victory.

Then came the reaction. Lusty cheers rose from all sides, helmets were tossed into the air, rifles were stacked, and impromptu cake walks and fox trots staged with grotesque abandon.

No one ventured into No Man’s Land, that was strictly forbidden; but all over the rear approaches jubilation reigned supreme.

Groups quickly formed, excitedly discussing it all, "What's the big idea?" "Has Jerry quit for good?" "How do you get that way?" Some burst into song: "I Don't Want to Go Home."

Suddenly a glorious sound came floating up the rear ravine; it was the Regimental band of the 7th Engineers, playing Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever!"

Oh, how it thrilled and touched our very depth of soul! Its melody burst upon our unaccustomed ears with something, at least, of the joy the shepherds felt, when Angels brought them "Good tidings" at Bethlehem!

Out of all this trance of joy, however, stern Duty soon called us. Many a silent body, our own and the enemy's, lay unburied along the front. On requisition at Headquarters, two companies from a Pioneer Infantry Regiment were assigned to us, co-ordinating with our regular Burial Details. Near and far we combed hills and plains for bodies, penetrating trenches, dugouts, and ruins. Six days of untiring effort, brought reward of warmly commending words from our Division Commander.

At Mass the following Sunday in the old

ruined Church of St. Sebastian at Euvezin, the subject was recalled of those days of old when the Galilean Sea was tempest tossed. Then in the boat rose the Master who said to the storm, "Peace! Be still! And there came a great calm." Even so, had that same Divine Power now spoken along our torn battle front; and "May the Peace and Calm that now has come reign on forever!"

That afternoon an artillery Regimental band gave a concert. Illustrative of the mental breadth and generous nature marking the real American boy, in its repertoire was to be observed Strouse's "Blue Danube Waltz!"

It was during one of these eventful days word reached us from across No Man's Land that old men, women and children in the town of Gorz, across the German border, were entirely without food, and dying of starvation.

Our forces were marking time in the positions the close of hostilities found them occupying, and, as the time for moving forward with the Army of Occupation was indefinite, we decided to go forward at once with food supplies for the starving inhabitants.

This aid work was to be entirely informal and on our own initiative, no military provision having been made for such emergency. With little difficulty five tons of army rations were secured, and, accompanied by good Major Hirsch, I set out.

Our journey took us through miles of devastated country. Tons upon tons of war material, abandoned by the retiring German troops, littered roads and fields. Clothing, helmets, small arms of all description, whole batteries of Howitzers still in position, dense black fumes from burning ammunition dumps, acres of barbed wire fields and hillsides shell-torn, bodies still unburied—all this was the spectacle of war havoc greeting the eye on every side.

In the chill of that bleak November evening we crossed the German frontier and entered Gorz. Aged and feeble men and women looked sadly at us from their doors. Children, whose pinched faces clearly showed the ravages of hunger, timidly followed our supply trucks up the deserted street.

We were the first American soldiers they had ever seen. Drawing up in front of the old mar-



"GREATER LOVE THAN THIS NO MAN HAS."





ket place, Major Hirsch explained our mission, speaking to the people in German.

When the poor starved creatures realized we were bringing them food, their joy knew no bounds; the children shouted with very joy and swarmed up into the trucks. We found ourselves crying, but supremely happy in the realization that we were doing the Master's work.

The inhabitants fluently spoke French as well as German; and when the children saw the Chaplain's cross and found I was a priest, their reverence and affection was most pronounced.

The food, indeed, was but the coarse Army fare, "bully" beef, hard tack, and condensed milk; but, withal, it was relished most keenly. We felt gratified in the humble part we had played in saving the lives of those unfortunate non-combatants, and organizing our first Divisional Relief Expedition into Germany.

## CHAPTER XI

### DOMREMY—HOME

"Major Whittington, I have not had a furlough since we landed in France."

"I guess that's so, Chaplain; which city would you prefer visiting, Paris or Metz?"

"Domremy—."

"Domremy!" he exclaimed, "I never heard of the place. However, you may go." Then, with forced seriousness, added, "I believe you are needed in Domremy on Official Business."

It was December eleventh. We had long been anxious to visit the birthplace of Joan of Arc. The story of her heroic brilliant life had ever interested and inspired us; and now, to actually be in the hills of her native Lorraine, to make a pilgrimage to her shrine, became our supreme ambition.

I could indeed have visited Domremy before, but purposely had I waited for this date. On December thirteenth, President Wilson, coming to the Peace Conference, was to land in France.

I wanted to say Mass, that very morning, at the shrine of the Maid for the welfare of the President.

A one hundred and fifty mile trip from Thiaucourt to Domremy, south of Verdun on the Meuse, especially in an open motorcycle car and through a blinding storm of hail and rain, is not particularly pleasant.

When we recalled, however, the arduous journey she, a girl, of eighteen years, had once made on horseback from Domremy to Chinon, three hundred miles, through snow-covered roads, we determined that nothing short of a Firing Squad should stop us.

A cold I had contracted at Rembercourt had settled in my back. Lumbago had painfully doubled me into an inverted "L," a figure not happily adapted to a cycle car.

Laboriously adjusting myself to the machine I plainly told the Maid, "I wish you clearly to appreciate, Saintly Joan, that I am making this journey for you. Of old, you were supremely helpful to the ruler of *your* country. I want you to do as much for the President of *mine*. I am going to say Mass on your home altar for

him, and I want you to help me. If God spares me, and I return to America, I promise to proclaim your glory and encourage all I can, young and old, in the practice of your devotion."

Early dawn found us on our way. The steel helmet pulled low offers splendid protection to one's eyes. Traversing the old battlefields of St. Mihiel, we passed ruined Euvezin and Essey and took the highroad leading south. The shell-torn steeple of Flirey church still leaned over the road; and the grewsome Limey Gondrecourt front, its deserted dugouts resembling grinning skulls, elicited a sigh and a prayer for its dead legions.

Through Noviant and Men-le-Tour we sped, and at noon were beyond Toul and racing through the historic valley of the Moselle.

At Bullney, our speeding car was curiously observed by thousands of German prisoners peering through the barbed wire enclosure of their roadside camp.

Columbes-les-Belles, with its huge hangars, grimly stood in silhouette against a crimson burst of sunset.

At Neufchateau we reached the river Meuse

with whose glory the names of heroic unconquerable Petain and Verdun shall be forever shared.

We were now in the picturesque "valley of colors," whose winding trails were trodden by the soldiers of Julius Caesar when "*Omnis Gallia divisa est in partes tres*" was written.

With pulse beat quickened by thought of our hallowed pilgrimage nearing its end, we rushed like a specter down the road, through winding vistas of giant cottonwood and poplar; rounding a hill we came in full view of Domremy, and, with a final burst of speed, rushed splashing, and all a-thrilled with emotion, into its single street.

Drawing up in front of the church, that of St. Remi, Apostle of the Franks, we were at once surrounded and curiously observed by a group of children. "Are these children now to see a soldier, still crippled with lumbago, or one the intercession of Joan has made whole?" This was the question I soliloquized, as I started to excavate myself from the mud-littered car!

My chauffeur eyed me askance; and the look of pleasure with which he noted my evident recovery, told me he was as proud as I. The

Saintly Maid had wrought her cure completely and with generous finality.

At once we entered the Church. Five hundred years before Jacques and Isabelle d'Arc had crossed that very threshold, carrying the precious babe Joan to be baptized. The glowing ray of the sanctuary light welcomed us, and, perhaps, turned to jewels the tears of joy and reverence coursing our cheeks.

The rough hobble nails of our shoes rang alarmingly on the stone pavement as we made our way up the hallowed aisle. On our knees before the altar we literally cried our prayers.

Looking toward the lowly Tabernacle we felt that Jesus, the gentle Master there present, was pleased with us. He seemed to look approvingly upon us and to say, "My soldiers, rest here your weary head upon My Heart."

At the very railing where we knelt, Joan had made her First Communion. Just at our left on the Epistle side was the ancient font where she had been cleansed from original sin, made a Christian, a child of God, and heir to the Kingdom of Heaven. In the twilight, too, we could see the faded plaster statue of St. Catherine

Martyr, for whom she had special devotion. We felt, in that holy hour, that Joan, high in heaven, was pleased even with us; for we, too, had fought and bled for the same holy cause, the cause of Truth and Justice in the world, for which she had with the Greater Love offered the sacrifice of her life. How often, in that hallowed long ago, had the sun of early morning or the twilight glow of eventide found Joan here at prayer. In this sanctuaried Garden of the Lord grew the fairest Flower of Chivalry. Here did she receive the Bread of Life, the Wine that maketh Virgins; here, by frequent confession, was her soul kept fair and pure as the lilies of Paradise.

Darkness had fallen over the village when we left the Church. A call at the Rectory informed us that Monseieur le Cure was absent, and would not return till a late hour. At the end of the street we found a dear old couple, living alone, who agreed to shelter us for the night. With what skill good Madame made ready that evening meal! Sitting in the square of light cast by the glowing fireplace, and with our shadows, to the tempo of crackling fagots, in rhythmic



gyrations on the ancient walls, my driver and I watched her prepare it.

First there was the *pommes de terre* to be peeled, washed and sliced to the exact size of centuries old French fry. Monseieur was permitted to assist her in this, and wielded the keen bladed knife with precision. Then there was the salad and the seasoning of it to just that degree of the "delicieux" the palate revels in. With the art, as it were, of a magician, she drew from a huge cupboard the most inviting piece of beef and proudly flourished it before our devouring eyes. Here was the makings of a "filet de boeuf" fit for Epicurius himself. In the center of the table was next placed the great round loaf of bread, neither wheat nor oats nor rye, but a happy combination of all and delightfully toothsome. Crowning all, the liquid amber of *café-au-lait*, which Madame, timing our needs to a nicety, poured at just the right moment.

During the meal, we diligently inquired if any lineal descendants of the d'Arc family were to be found in Domremy. No, not one! No person of the name lived in the village; although most every girl and woman there bore the name of Joan!

After the meal, and when all had retired, I made my way out into the moon-lit night. Domremy was sleeping, nor did it give thought of "the stranger within its gates." Back to the Church, and to the home of Joan, still standing beside it, I made my way. I revelled in the historical ensemble of it all; and my desire was to become so imbued with its very atmosphere, as to verily breathe it all my remaining life. In fancy I reviewed the story of her life like pages of a book, and its thrilling deeds and transcending achievements were made real before me.

This very street was the Alpha of her public life; the market place of Rouen its Omega! Riding forth in the bitter cold of that February morning, 1429, with but meager escort and along three hundred miles of brigand-infested roads and trails, she traversed France to the court of Chinon. Convincing Charles VII of her divine vocation; throwing herself into the war; rallying the people to her standard; wounded in battle yet never wavering; animating veteran soldiers; bearing the brunt of the attack and shielding with her stainless bosom the heart of France.

Her recompense? Abandoned by her king

and by her countrymen, by the cruel path of flame she returns to God!

The several hours following Mass, we passed in the home where she was born, and on the hillside where she toiled as humble shepherdess. Reverently, and in very awe of its beauty, we visited the magnificent Basilica the people of France have raised to her memory. The structure is but partially finished; and I urged the good Fathers there in charge to visit America some day and give its people opportunity to contribute to so worthy a cause.

Returning to the front we found the "War Cross" which had arrived during our absence. Colonel Lenoncle wrote as follows:

"A Monsieur l'Aumonier McCarthy.

En appreciation de la belle action de Charite  
qu'el est venie accomplir pour notre chere  
terre de France.

P. Lenoncle, Col. Chas.  
in Compagne."

The above referred to services in Bois-le-Pretre.

"Tempora mutantur et nos ubique in illis." It is only the things that God has made that

change not. The moon, bathing in silvery sheen the village street, had made radiant, in that long ago, the face of Joan at prayer. The Meuse, softly flowing by, still voiced the echo of her dreams, and bore her spirit to the tideless sea.

Nature had not changed; neither had the Author of Nature whose creatures are all men and whose ways are wise and just. For He whose "Mills grind slowly yet grind exceedingly small" is likewise He whose Master hand has written in this our own day, the illuminated Manuscript of her solemn Canonization.

The golden fingers of next morning's sun were scattering incense of light over Joan's Altar as I began Mass. The lips of Old Glory kissed the Gospel side, while the tri-color of France was draped on the Epistle. A nun of the village answered the responses. Reverently I besought the Author of All that is Right and Mighty upon the earth to bless our President; to be light to his path, wisdom to his mind, and right hand to his endeavor. That rulers of earth might base their deliberations on the rock of the Divine; mindful, that "unless the Lord build the house in vain does he labor who would build it."

On December fifteenth I wrote as follows:

Headquarters Seventh Division,  
American Expeditionary Forces, France  
Hon. Woodrow Wilson, President,  
American Embassy, Paris.

My dear Mr. President:

May I be permitted the honor of informing you that on Saturday morning, December fourteenth, I said Mass on the Altar of Jeanne d'Arc in her old church at Domremy, praying and believing that God would bless and direct you, as of old He did the Maid, as His chosen representative of Justice and enduring Peace.

Most respectfully and devotedly yours,  
GEORGE T. MCCARTHY,  
Senior Chaplain, Seventh Division,  
A. P. O. 793.

On December twenty-fifth I received the following:

Rev. George T. McCarthy,  
Senior Chaplain, Seventh Division, A. P. O.  
793.

My dear Chaplain McCarthy:

The President directs me to acknowledge re-

ceipt of your letter of December fifteenth and to thank you for it. It is indeed gratifying for him to know that you are thinking of him and praying for him especially in these critical times.

Very cordially yours,

GILBERT CLOSE,

Confidential Secretary to the President.

Christmas Day was memorable. A fall of snow gave festive atmosphere to our outpost homes. "Jip" carried me from Euvezin, where I said Mass for Headquarters troop, to Grey Hound, where I repeated the Sacrifice for the Signal Battalion. With the coming of the holiday the boys had been rehearsing an old-fashioned minstrel show, with boxing and wrestling matches as side attractions. A long rambling shack near Bouillonville had been secured for the entertainment, and its battered walls adorned with holly and cedar branches. The hearts of all were sad and pensive that Christmas Day, far overseas, and the entertainment, lasting through five hilarious hours, did wonders in the way of reviving depressed spirits.

December twenty-ninth marked the "ne plus

ultra" of my active service overseas! In an old shack on the hills, swept with rain and swarming with well meaning but annoying rats, I came down with the flu with a temperature of 103 degrees. Doctor Lugar, who had nursed me through the gas attack, shook his head and ordered me sent to Evacuation Hospital No. 1. Here I was delighted to meet my old friend Father Morris O'Shea of Buffalo, there stationed as Chaplain. A few days later I was sent to Base Hospital "51" at Toul. The Medical Staff ordered me from Toul to America, and on February first I arrived at St. Nazaire on Biscay Bay. My supreme joy here was in meeting my niece, Miss Honor Barry, who had served as an Army Corps nurse in Base Hospital 101, located at this seaport, during nine arduous months.

On February ninth I sailed on the Manchuria, arriving in New York on February twenty-second. Reporting at General Hospital 28, Fort Sheridan, Ill., was thence ordered to the Army Hospital at Asheville, North Carolina. Six weeks in the ozoned hills of the Southland restored perfect health; and on May first reported for active duty at Fort Sheridan.



With the memory of sweet Domremy still before us, we shall bring the humble record of service Over There to its close.

In this period of valedictory may we be permitted a concluding reflection, projected in clear outline on the background of those thrilling days now forever over. That reflection, in silhouette, is this—the great crises of life—whether decisive of weal or of woe, are, to the soul of normal man, God impelling! In direct ratio as danger and death impended in the gloomy wastes of No Man's Land, all soldiers grew religious and turned instinctively to God. In the zero hour the profane grew silent and the curse died unuttered on his lip. All, all, *realized* God! The trench became His sanctuary, the flaming front His Presence Light, the glow on the faces of dying comrades visualized the Gospel of His Greater Love.

We needed God Over There, we need Him equally as much Over Here! Peace has its trials, its dangers, its lurking foes, its pitfalls, its hills of Pride to be conquered, its valleys of Despond to be overcome. The Rembercourt of Life lies before us. We survived *that* attack—who shall survive Death's *final* hill crest!









